DOUBLE ISSUE

NOV. 26 / DEC. 3, 2018

TIME

Who Gets to Be American?

by VIET THANH NGUYEN

The Asylum Wars
by MAYA RHODAN

Thanksgiving at the Border
by W.J. HENNIGAN

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U.S. soldiers train in lifesaving techniques on Nov. 13 at Sunglow City, the new Army outpost in Tucson, Ariz.

Photograph by Meridith Kohut for TIME

ON THE COVER: *Photo-illustration by Hank Willis Thomas and Emily Shur—For Freedoms*

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Conversation

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT ...

REDDER. BLUER. TRUMPIER. Molly Ball's Nov. 19 cover story on the 2018 U.S. midterm elections sparked debate on Facebook—with some reactions as split as America's politics as a whole. Aldrin Ramirez DeCaro said the Republican hold on the Senate is a sign of American support for President Trump, while Jeanne Kalver joked that the cover illustration of red hands grabbing at the flag might represent Republicans "getting caught red-handed with all their lies." Other comments, however, focused on a need to transcend party lines. "As much as I disagree with Trump, his presidency is good for our political system," wrote Jonathan Bocanegra. "It's getting people out to vote." Thomas Verdon wrote, "Everyone is to blame here [because] everyone is using divisive speech."

> ***'[The] nation's flag ... doesn't mean what it used to any longer.'***
>
> **VICTORIA ANN,** Facebook

PINK WAVE Charlotte Alter's feature in that issue about the women who won on Election Day prompted @madorairene to tweet that "women must take over" to remedy the "stupidity" of those currently in power. But Joannah Ginsburg Ganz of Dallas argued that the article's opening anecdote, about candidates exchanging emojis, undermined its own thesis by evoking "a sense of softness and of not being taken seriously, notions women continually have to fight against." Looking ahead, wrote Facebook user Qamber Jafri, demographics will favor Democrats if the party can keep engaging women like those in the story, along with young people and people of color, but "how to keep that combination energized is the key."

> ***'More women = more collaboration = better country.'***
>
> **JANE GOLDNER,** Atlanta

BEHIND THE COVER Look familiar? This week's cover features a modern update on Norman Rockwell's *Freedom of Worship* from the American artist's iconic 1943 "Four Freedoms" series, inspired by FDR's 1941 State of the Union. Nonpartisan arts group For Freedoms re-created the whole set; see more at **time.com/four-freedoms**

EXPOSURES On TIME.com, see how photographer Brenda Ann Kenneally documents life under the poverty line—and challenges stereotypes about class—in Troy, N.Y., where she grew up. Above, Andi Lynne Cavanaugh in 2004, then 12. "I didn't know I would go on to document her for 14 years," Kenneally says. See photos from her new book at **time.com/upstate-girls**

GIFT GUIDE TIME's 2018 installment of our Best Inventions list *(page 50)* can also help jump-start your holiday shopping, thanks to gift-friendly items like Nintendo Labo, for build-and-play gamers, and the Gravity Blanket, a weighted blanket that helps some people sleep better. See them all at **time.com/bestinventions2018**

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BEHIND THE COVER: FREEDOM OF WORSHIP © SEPS; EXPOSURES: BRENDA ANN KENNEALLY

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Y0066_180801_050652_M Accepted SPRJ45740_PSC2075737

1,204

Number of backlogged Freedom of Information Act lawsuits against federal government agencies in fiscal year 2018—a record high, according to a Nov. 12 Syracuse University report

'She was up and working ... and cracking jokes. I can't promise they were good jokes, but they were jokes.'

DANIEL STIEPLEMAN,
nephew of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, giving an update on his aunt's recovery from three rib fractures she suffered after a Nov. 7 fall

14

Number of write-in votes received by Gritty, the Philadelphia Flyers mascot, for various local offices in Camden County, New Jersey, during the midterm elections

'WE SIT IN OUR OWN PAIN, THINKING THAT SOMEHOW WE'RE BROKEN.'

MICHELLE OBAMA,
former U.S. First Lady, describing her feelings after a miscarriage, in a Nov. 9 *Good Morning America* segment about her memoir *Becoming;* she urged women to "share the truth" about their bodies

'If he invited me to a public hanging, I'd be on the front row.'

CINDY HYDE-SMITH,
U.S. Senator from Mississippi, joking about appreciating a rancher who invited her to a campaign event, in a video that sparked outrage when revealed on Nov. 11; the Republican will face Democrat Mike Espy, who is African American, in a Nov. 27 runoff for her seat representing the state that holds the ignominious record for the most lynchings

'We can be good people who care deeply about each other even when we disagree.'

KYRSTEN SINEMA,
Arizona Senator-elect, in her Nov. 12 victory speech; the Democrat will be the state's first woman and the first openly bisexual person to serve in the U.S. Senate

'Women aren't being paid what their true value is.'

JUSTIN TRUDEAU,
Canadian Prime Minister, discussing how to tackle his nation's gender wage gap in a Nov. 12 CNN interview

1 min., 36.39 sec.

New world-record time for solving three Rubik's Cubes simultaneously with both hands and feet, set by 13-year-old Que Jianyu of China on Nov. 8, Guinness World Records Day

Beetles
As the insect's numbers fall, a study suggests heat waves sterilize males

The Beatles
Their classic *White Album* was rereleased to mark its 50th anniversary

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN FOR TIME

SOURCES: ASSOCIATED PRESS; BILLBOARD; GUARDIAN; NEW YORK TIMES

A Timely Message to the World

"Malaysia: Bullish on Bouncing Back."
That was our pledge 20 years ago when we rallied to overcome the Asian economic crisis.
Recently we again endured dark days and uncertainty. We had to bring about change.
We had to right the wrong.

So in the recent general election, we Malaysians finally said enough is enough,
and stood together to bring our country back on track, back into the light – back to a stable future.

We must now continue our country's first 52 years of noble achievements
in development and progress, as well as in racial and religious harmony.

We are determined to regain the respect of the world.

They say it's always darkest before the dawn.

This, then, is our new dawn. Our new and even better Malaysia.

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The Brief

PARIS MISMATCH
Donald Trump clashed with Emmanuel Macron during an Armistice Day visit to Paris

INSIDE

AFTER YEARS OF COMBAT, PRESSURE BUILDS ON SAUDIS TO END THE WAR IN YEMEN

MIDTERM VOTE COUNTING SEEMS AWFULLY SLOW. IS IT REALLY?

STAN LEE'S MARVEL HEROES CHANGED COMIC BOOKS—AND THE WORLD

PHOTOGRAPH BY LUDOVIC MARIN

DIPLOMACY

Divided leaders recall a world at war

By Vivienne Walt/Paris

OVER A RAINY NOVEMBER WEEKEND IN PARIS, dozens of world leaders gathered in the French capital to remember the horrors of World War I, which ended 100 years ago and claimed 16 million lives. But overshadowing the ceremonies was a war of words between U.S. President Donald Trump and his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron.

Problems began when Macron outlined plans for a "true European army" in a radio interview on Nov. 6. Speaking about growing threats such as cyberattacks and election meddling, he cited the need for protection against "China, Russia and even the United States of America." Trump, touching down in Paris three days later, tweeted that the idea was "very insulting!" When the two leaders met on Nov. 10 at the Élysée Palace to discuss European defense spending, frozen smiles replaced the effusive hugs they shared when Trump visited Paris in July 2017.

In theory, the occasion should have recalled centuries of Franco-American ties. Instead, Trump cut a disengaged figure in Paris. As the leaders of Canada, France and Germany paid their respects to their fallen dead on Nov. 10, the U.S. President skipped a visit to the Aisne-Marne war cemetery, burial site of more than 2,200 Americans killed in WW I. Bad weather had grounded his helicopter, and so Trump stayed in Paris.

The next day, Macron unleashed his sharpest rebuke yet against Trump and his "America first" values in a speech under the Arc de Triomphe. "Nationalism is a betrayal of patriotism," he said, as Trump, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Vladimir Putin looked on. "By saying we put our own interests first, with no regard to others, we erase what a nation holds dearest … its moral values."

C'EST COMPLIQUÉ Americans were among those who celebrated the World War I armistice in Paris on Nov. 11, 1918 *(above)*. Franco-American feelings at its centennial were decidedly less jubilant.

BY NOW, Macron knows Trump will pay his words no heed. His pleas have failed to stop Trump from ditching the Iran nuclear agreement and the Paris Agreement on climate change; moving the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem; or imposing import tariffs on the U.S.'s oldest allies, including the E.U. and Canada.

That's why he and Merkel have escalated their calls for Europeans to forge their own paths. Macron has repeatedly floated the idea of the E.U.'s developing armed forces to feasibly mobilize in battle. Without that, Macron says, Europeans will forever remain dependent on "outside" help. And "outside" most certainly means the U.S.

Europe has already unveiled common defense policies; under a 2017 agreement signed by 25 E.U. nations, projects to develop shared operational systems, logistics, cybersecurity and even light armored vehicles are in the works.

But the idea of a "Euro army" to rival or replace NATO has little chance of becoming reality, according to analysts. "The E.U. is not a country. It is not a state," says François Heisbourg, special adviser to the Foundation for Strategic Research in Paris. Europe will also continue to rely on U.S. help for strategic support, no matter who is in the White House. NATO was created in 1949 to bring postwar Europe under America's security wing, and that has shaped the development of armed forces on the Continent for decades. "They could not manage without the U.S. in a big crisis," says Michael Shurkin, a senior political scientist for the Rand Corp. "All of them have militaries designed to work as a coalition run by the U.S."

Macron surely knows his army is likely a pipe dream. But in pushing for it, he is signaling that after 70 years, Europe can no longer assume the unflinching support of the U.S. Increasingly, E.U. leaders are seeking other alliances. Just as Japan, Australia, Mexico and others have ratified a new trans-Pacific trade deal to replace the one that Trump ditched, so E.U. nations have created a parallel trading mechanism with Iran to try to keep the nuclear deal alive and galvanized governments and businesses to try to meet the promises of the climate agreement.

On Nov. 30, Macron, Merkel and Canada's Justin Trudeau will have another chance to argue their case, when leaders meet at the G-20 summit in Buenos Aires. But Trump has already made clear he doesn't intend to change. On Nov. 13, he offered a belated riposte to Macron's speech. "By the way, there is no country more nationalist than France," he tweeted. "MAKE FRANCE GREAT AGAIN." At the Argentine summit, Trump's key priorities will be bilateral meetings with fellow nationalists Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping, not multilateral dealmaking with Western allies. Once again, the ideological rift at the highest level of world affairs will be laid bare.

A century ago, divisions between the world's great powers led to one of the bloodiest conflicts in human history. Macron seized upon the parallels with today when he inaugurated the first Paris Peace Forum, a three-day summit about the state of the world on Armistice Day, Nov. 11. "Will [this] be a snapshot of the final moment of unity, before the world descends into disorder?" he said onstage, as he gazed out at Merkel, Putin, U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres and dozens of other leaders. "The answer is down to us," he said. Trump was not there to listen. By then, he was on his way back to Washington. ☐

PREVIOUS PAGE: POOL/REUTERS; THESE PAGES: PARIS: TIME LIFE PICTURES/GETTY; YEMEN: AFP/GETTY

Parts of Yemen's capital Sana'a, seen above last December, have been reduced to rubble by airstrikes

THE BULLETIN

No respite for Yemen yet—but pressure to end the Saudi-led war ramps up

ON NOV. 10, THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION announced that the U.S. would stop refueling Saudi warplanes engaged in the bombing of Yemen—a move hailed by some as a sign that U.S. support for the Saudi project, in its fourth year, is waning. Three days later, the Saudis provisionally agreed to allow evacuation of some wounded from among the rebels they're fighting, a condition the U.K. said had been a key hurdle at peace talks that collapsed in September. As global concern rises over Yemen's fate, is progress finally being made toward peace?

FORGOTTEN WAR The war, launched in 2015 by a Saudi-led coalition against Houthi rebels backed by Iran, has left tens of thousands dead and millions displaced. On Oct. 15, the U.N. warned of a humanitarian catastrophe, with 13 million people at risk of starvation. Until recently, rising casualties and a cholera epidemic infecting 1.2 million people had failed to dent U.S. and U.K. military support for the Saudis. But with the public mood shifting, top officials from both countries are urging a cease-fire.

WAKE-UP CALL The tipping point may have come when Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi was murdered in his country's consulate in Istanbul on Oct. 2. The killing led to heightened scrutiny of Saudi Arabia, including the Yemen conflict and the U.S.'s and U.K.'s role in it. On Nov. 11, 30 former Obama Administration officials, under whom the war was launched, wrote to Trump. "We did not intend U.S. support to the coalition to become a blank check," they said. "It is past time for America's role in this disastrous war in Yemen to end."

WAY FORWARD For now, Washington is still providing the Saudis with training and intelligence sharing. House Republicans blocked a Nov. 13 vote on U.S. military support for the war, making change unlikely before Democrats gain control of the chamber in January. Hopes for a cease-fire hinge on U.N.-led peace talks, proposed for Sweden at the end of 2018—but on the ground at the port city of Hodeidah, a crucial channel for 80% of Yemen's food imports, a battle still rages. —BILLY PERRIGO

NEWS TICKER

U.K. and E.U. agree on draft Brexit deal

After months of negotiations, British Prime Minister Theresa May's office said on Nov. 13 that officials had agreed on **a draft text of the terms of the U.K.'s leaving the E.U.** May is hoping British lawmakers and E.U. member states will approve the deal by Britain's scheduled departure date of March 29, 2019.

El Chapo trial starts with tight security

The trial of Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán, **the accused Mexican drug lord who faces 17 counts,** began in Brooklyn on Nov. 13. Extra security measures put in place because of Guzmán's record of twice escaping from prison included keeping jurors and some witnesses anonymous.

Missile bases discovered in North Korea

Satellite images released on Nov. 12 by a Washington-based think tank revealed **more than a dozen missile bases in North Korea** that took analysts by surprise. The bases raised questions about President Trump's claim that North Korea is no longer a nuclear threat, but he said he was already aware of them.

NEWS TICKER

Hate crimes increased 17% in 2017 in U.S.

U.S. law-enforcement agencies reported 7,175 hate crimes in 2017, up from 6,121 in 2016, according to newly released FBI data. **Over half of hate crimes targeted race or ethnicity;** those against Jews increased more sharply, with 37% more incidents than in the previous year.

Pilots: Boeing withheld safety information

Airplane manufacturer Boeing **failed to tell pilots details of a new anti-stall system** that may have caused the Oct. 29 Lion Air crash in Indonesia, according to pilots and safety experts in a Nov. 13 *Wall Street Journal* report. The company says it has confidence in its planes and is cooperating with investigations into the incident.

CNN sues Trump Admin on press pass

CNN sued the Trump Administration on Nov. 13 in an effort to reinstate the revoked **press pass of its chief White House correspondent,** Jim Acosta. The suit comes after the White House falsely claimed Acosta put his hands on an intern who reached for his mic during a verbal clash with Trump.

GOOD QUESTION

Why did U.S. midterm vote counting seem to take so long this year?

AFTER ALL THE BUILDUP TO AN ELECTION Day that saw the highest midterm turnout in a century, to wait days or weeks to find out who won a race is painful. It's also routine.

In the wake of the Nov. 6 elections, Arizona's Senate race, Georgia's gubernatorial race and Florida's Senate and gubernatorial races went into overtime as local boards of election dived into the painstaking process of tabulating votes. But it was in Florida where things got the most heated, and the state illustrates how a process that's working normally can attract attention that makes it seem strange.

Frustration over a lack of transparency in vote counting in two big counties sparked the ire of Florida Governor Rick Scott, who was leading in his race for the Senate. He argued, without evidence, that "unethical liberals" were trying to "steal this election." President Donald Trump picked up the claims, tweeting out conspiracy theories and baseless accusations that ballots counted late were "massively infected." Republican Senator Marco Rubio and the National Republican Senatorial Committee also weighed in, raising questions about the election process in the state.

Florida's own election monitors found no evidence of fraud, while the Florida department of law enforcement said it had received no reports of illegal activity. A circuit-court judge then told lawyers for both sides to "ramp down the rhetoric."

Election experts say it's true that Broward and Palm Beach counties have had some problems in the past with handling the elections and slow ballot counting. But that's completely different than the fraud Republicans were alleging.

In fact, states all over the country count ballots beyond Election Day, and reforms enacted after Florida's agonizing recount in the 2000 presidential election actually made this situation *more* common. Edward Foley, director of the election-law program at the Ohio State University's Moritz College of Law, says those post-2000 changes allowed more voters to cast provisional ballots and encouraged the wider use of absentee and mail-in ballots. Counting those ballots just takes a bit longer.

"That's now built into the system," Foley tells TIME. "It's an accidental by-product of positive reforms."

Throwing around allegations of voter fraud is not new territory for Trump. He previously claimed, without evidence, that Texas Senator Ted Cruz "illegally stole" the Iowa caucus, warned that the 2016 general election would be "rigged," then trumpeted the unfounded claim that millions of people voted illegally when he lost the popular-vote count.

David Becker, executive director and founder of the Center for Election Innovation and Research, says such claims can have effects that last much longer than any vote tally. "It's really damaging," he says. "This idea that elections are just a political game to be played by adversaries is not healthy for democracy." —ABIGAIL ABRAMS

TECHNOLOGY

Blasts from the past

The U.K.'s TV licensing body revealed Nov. 8 that there are around 7,000 households in Britain still watching television in black and white. Here, other odd anachronisms. —*George Steer*

FAXING FEVER
In Japan, the fax machine remains popular. In 2011, according to the government's Cabinet Office, nearly 100% of the nation's offices and 45% of private homes had a fax machine.

TOP TAPES
According to the data-analytics firm Nielsen, sales of cassette tapes in the U.S. have more than quadrupled over the past seven years. Roughly 174,000 were sold in 2017, making up 0.1% of total album sales.

FAIL-SAFE FOWL
In 2011, the People's Liberation Army in China revealed it still retains an army of 600 courier pigeons. In case of a breakdown in digital communication, the bird reserves would deliver vital messages.

GETTY IMAGES

DELAYED
A vote on **a plan to address the sexual-abuse crisis in the Catholic Church,** by the Vatican on Nov. 12. American bishops convened expecting to make changes but were told to wait until after a meeting next year.

DECLARED
That the latest **Ebola outbreak** in the Democratic Republic of Congo is the worst in the country's history, by Congo's Health Ministry on Nov. 11. More than 200 people have died since August.

SKIPPED
A series of **annual Asian summits,** by President Donald Trump. Vice President Mike Pence went instead, but the move left experts concerned about U.S. policy toward Asia.

ELECTED
Representative Kevin McCarthy, the current No. 2 House Republican, as the new House minority leader on Nov. 14. He defeated hard-line Ohio conservative Representative Jim Jordan.

PURCHASED
A record-breaking **$30.8 billion** in merchandise on Alibaba, China's e-commerce giant, on the Singles Day holiday on Nov. 11. The sales underscore the growing clout of China's middle class.

SUSPENDED
The in-person sale of **most flavors of Juul e-cigarette pods,** on Nov. 13, by the company, which also quit social media as it faces censure over teen vaping.

Lee at his office in Los Angeles on Jan. 14, 2018, with Spider-Man, one of the heroes who made him a comics legend

LEE: MICHAEL LEWIS; AMAZON: THOMAS TRUTSCHEL—PHOTOTHEK/GETTY IMAGES

DIED

Stan Lee
A marvelous mind

STAN LEE, THE MARVEL COMICS WRITER AND EDITOR WHO died Nov. 12 at 95, revolutionized the comic book in the 20th century and set the stage for a superhero takeover of the silver screen in the 21st.

Lee, who was born Stanley Martin Lieber in New York City to Romanian Jewish immigrants, once said he took up a pen name not over worries about anti-Semitism but so he could write a "real book" under his birth name. He wouldn't need to. Instead he established comics as a legitimate art form.

The turning point came in the early 1960s, after Marvel tasked Lee with creating superheroes to compete with those at rival DC Comics. Although uncomplicated, square-jawed do-gooders like Superman had come to dominate the format after a 1950s Senate subcommittee condemned comics as immoral, Lee took a different tack. He and co-creator Jack Kirby imbued characters with flaws: Spider-Man with teenage angst, Iron Man with egotism, the misunderstood X-Men with vengefulness. His heroes were modern and relatable, and appealed to adults as well as kids.

Lee's stories eventually became the engine that drove the Marvel Cinematic Universe, which has grossed more than $17.5 billion over the past decade. Even as he aged, Lee gleefully took on cameos in every one of those films. It seemed he had superpowers too.

—ELIANA DOCKTERMAN

ANNOUNCED

Amazon goes east
Big-money moves

THE WORD *AMAZON* HAS BEcome as synonymous with Seattle as it is with South America, but on Nov. 13, the e-commerce giant confirmed reports that it would establish two new headquarters in the metro areas of New York City and Washington, D.C.

It's a big deal for the company, and for the cities involved in the yearlong lobbying bonanza that led up to it. The growth promised by Amazon, including some 50,000 high-paying jobs and $5 billion in investment, led some locales to offer upward of $7 billion in economic incentives with the hopes of winning "HQ2." That prospect worried municipal watchdogs who say such deals can hurt cities in the long run. Amazon's announcement that Long Island City, N.Y., and Arlington, Va., had been picked also noted that the locations collectively offered incentives worth about $2 billion, below other bids. It was proof that access to skilled workers can be more compelling than tax breaks, although it still sets a precedent that incentives matter.

In Virginia and New York, leaders touted their victory. Among the also-rans, there was soul-searching. "I like to win," said Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings, "so my heart's broken today."

—KATY STEINMETZ

ESPN hoops analyst and Hall of Fame honoree **Doris Burke** blazes a trail in sportscasting

By Sean Gregory

THE INDIANA PACERS ARE HOSTING THE Philadelphia 76ers on an early November evening at Bankers Life Fieldhouse. About a half hour before tip-off, a couple of fans jostle for position courtside, trying to steal a moment with a star attraction. These men aren't seeking an autograph from Pacers guard Victor Oladipo, an emerging NBA talent. Nor do they clamor for attention from Philadelphia's Joel Embiid, the 7-footer who can do it all on the court. No, they want to mingle with the woman wearing a headset at the broadcast table, buried in pregame preparation. "I can't believe," says a starstruck Jack Hahn, a 44-year-old auto-parts salesman, "that's Doris Burke."

An ESPN basketball announcer for more than 25 years, Burke, 53, is one of the most popular sportscasters in America. When she was named a full-time NBA color commentator before the start of last season, she became the first woman ever to take on such a regular national NBA game-analyst role. This main-stage appointment came after years of a grueling schedule broadcasting a mix of women's and men's college basketball, the WNBA and the NBA. Burke is the rare broadcaster who's earned respect and admiration from players, coaches and fans alike. She stands out for dropping insightful factoids and sharing her passion sans shtick. After Embiid dribbled around a defender for a slam, Burke translated his message: "You can have no part of this. I am too good for you!"

Her style has earned Burke a cult following. A colleague, former NBA coach Jeff Van Gundy, once called her the "LeBron James of sportscasters," and Kevin Durant called her "the greatest." In 2016, the rapper Drake donned a T-shirt with her likeness while sitting courtside at a Toronto Raptors game. WOMAN CRUSH EVERYDAY, read the words—a play on the popular Instagram trend Woman Crush Wednesday.

But Burke needs no celebrity endorsements for validation. In September she became the first female broadcaster to receive the hoops Hall of Fame's Curt Gowdy Media Award, given annually to media members who've made "outstanding contributions to basketball." "My imagination could not have dreamed this up," she told TIME over crab cakes, brussels sprouts and red wine at an Indianapolis hotel the night before the Pacers-Sixers game. "Not in a million years."

When she first started analyzing men's college games in the 1990s—and later NBA contests—she heard objections from critics who thought a woman shouldn't call men's sports. One viewer even mailed a misogynistic screed to her home, including a disturbing statement she can't seem to forget: "When a woman says 'no,' she means 'yes.'" Scared, Burke called ESPN security.

Over the years, such ugliness has largely faded. A prominent college basketball reporter once called her aside before a game to let her know that after listening to her, he was totally wrong for objecting to her presence on the air. She's heard similar mea culpas from others. "I understood when I started that people would question that—'Why is she there?'" says Burke. "Gender dynamics are in play. Sports is nothing more than a reflection of society, so women have always occupied certain positions, have been viewed in certain lights. It's not until they venture into other spaces that things change."

Burke's seat in the booth is set. She signed a five-year contract extension with ESPN in June and is on board to break down the NBA's most intriguing developments—the Golden State Warriors' dynasty, LeBron James in L.A. She preps in an analog fashion, stuffing a few oversize manila envelopes, onto which she's scratched detailed notes on the players, into a black Tumi backpack. After Philadelphia's win, her papers are strewn out on a table. "Look at that carnage," Burke says. "It's a disaster." A few more fans ask for selfies. Burke takes one with three young boys, one of whom compliments her work on the popular NBA *2K* basketball video-game series, to which she lends her voice. Her play-by-play partner, Mark Jones, hangs back. He smiles, acknowledging his role as second fiddle. "I'm just part of the vapor," he says.

THE YOUNGEST OF EIGHT KIDS, Burke grew up playing hoops in Manasquan, a New Jersey shore town. After watching college games on NBC on weekends, she'd sometimes run out of her house with a ball and high-five the hedges, as if she were entering an arena for layup lines. Burke and a friend talked the boys' high school coach into letting them play at a basketball camp, where they were the only girls. At one point, the coach called on the campers to split up into shirts and skins. "She and I just looked at each other," says Burke, laughing at the memory. "What now?"

Burke earned a basketball scholarship to Providence College and went on to become an assistant coach there, a gig she loved. But after two seasons, she concluded that the long hours weren't compatible with starting a family. Burke, however, jumped at the chance to announce Providence women's

BURKE QUICK FACTS

Helping hand
The former Doris Sable played point guard for Providence College from 1983 to 1987, graduating as the school's all-time assists leader, with 602. (She's since been bumped to No. 2.)

Pathfinder
In 2000, Burke filled in for Walt Frazier to become the first female game analyst for the New York Knicks.

Basketball brain
To stay sharp, Burke tries to watch two NBA games a night during the season.

MARK MAKELA—THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX

basketball games on the radio. When a broadcaster failed to show up for a Providence men's TV game, she subbed in on short notice and delivered. Burke kept getting assignments: she estimates she called 110 women's and men's games during one season in the early 2000s. Meanwhile, she tried to tune out the vitriol. "Your bosses will tell you how you're doing," says Burke. "All the other stuff is bullsh-t."

Not long after Burke started calling NBA games on ESPN in 2007, San Antonio Spurs coach Gregg Popovich, who's won five NBA championships and is notoriously grouchy with media, was explaining some strategy in a production meeting. "Doris, you're a basketball person," he told Burke. "You get this." Such acknowledgment boosted her confidence. "My whole soul was smiling," Burke says.

Still, she's subjected to standards that men don't face. About a decade ago, Burke felt ESPN wasn't giving her the high-profile analyst assignments she deserved and voiced her frustration, leading to an honest conversation with a male producer. For years, she "wore out the school blazer," she says, in order to project an air of seriousness like the guys.

'Sports is nothing more than a reflection of society.'

DORIS BURKE,
NBA TV analyst

But the producer insisted that she let her hair down and dress with more style. TV, after all, is a visual medium. "I'm like, Yep, you're right," she says. "I'm a realist, you know?" Now she tries to have fun with her style choices. At a postgame nightcap with her ESPN colleagues, Burke delighted in sharing a text that her son Matthew, 24, sent her about that night's black and white ensemble. "Doris Burke out here prepping for the 76ers game like," he wrote, under a picture of two pilgrims.

Burke doesn't envision calling games much beyond another five years. For one thing, she wants to be a full-time grandmother eventually. (Burke also has a daughter in her early 20s.) When she does step away, she'll have left her mark. Burke was one of the first women to call men's sports. Now Jessica Mendoza is one of ESPN's lead baseball analysts. Candace Parker does color commentary for NBA TV games. Sarah Kustok's the lead analyst for Brooklyn Nets broadcasts. "This next generation seems to me more confident, more enlightened, less accepting that things should just be," says Burke. "And that just gives me joy." ◻

California burning

THE SO-CALLED CAMP FIRE RAVAGING THE SIERRA NEVADA foothills in Northern California started on Nov. 8 as so many others do: a small spark in a remote area becomes a fire, unnoticed until it's a bigger fire, at which point authorities race to extinguish it—or at least to try.

But despite its origins, the Camp Fire is no ordinary inferno. Even by wildfire standards it moved quickly, accelerated by a combination of strong wind gusts and abundant fuel in the form of dry, dead plant material. It burned through 15 acres before the first fire engine arrived, said Butte County fire chief Darren Reed. Within 90 minutes it had spread 6.5 miles; in 17 hours it stretched across 19.

The fire transformed towns like Paradise and Magalia from bucolic foothill communities to lifeless hellscapes. Its speed and strength made it hard to predict and control, and evacuation plans, hammered out over years of experience, proved inadequate. Many residents found themselves trapped in traffic with embers falling on their vehicles and spot fires sparking on the roadsides. They were the lucky ones. At least 42 were reported dead as of Nov. 12, and hundreds more were missing. "Some just couldn't outrun it," said Butte County supervisor Bill Connelly.

From outside, it looked like the whole state was aflame. As of Nov. 13, the Nurse Fire still burned in nearby Solano

A firefighter on watch as the Camp Fire burns in Paradise, Calif., on Nov. 8

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER DASILVA—EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK

LightBox

JAY CALDERON—THE DESERT SUN/SIPA USA; NOAH BERGER—AP/SHUTTERSTOCK; JAE C. HONG—AP/SHUTTERSTOCK; WALLY SKALIJ—LOS ANGELES TIMES/POLARIS

County, and the Hill and Woolsey fires raged in Southern California. (Like storms, wildfires are given names so that authorities can easily refer to them; unlike storms, those names are generally geographic rather than human.) All told, these four fires burned more than 200,000 acres and destroyed more than 7,000 structures in less than a week. With that, the Camp Fire became the most destructive fire in the state's history, edging the 5,600 structures the Tubbs Fire destroyed in Sonoma and Napa Counties last year.

In California, officials have learned to write records in pencil. Nine of the state's 20 most destructive fires have occurred since 2015, and officials warn that the latest destruction is just the beginning. The Golden State is still reeling from a drought that killed off trees and plants earlier this decade, leaving acres of tinder behind, and long-term global warming promises to exacerbate the problem. "Things like this will be part of our future," California Governor Jerry Brown said at a Nov. 11 press conference. "Things like this, and worse."

Proximity to nature, a hallmark of California living, has always carried risks. What planners call the state's massive "urban-wildland interface" means houses are at immediate risk from fires in a forest right off the back deck. But the rate of loss has never been what it's become—thousands of homes, from trailer parks to the Malibu mansions of movie stars reduced to ash in November alone. And a "fire season" historically confined to only the driest months of the year now stretches all the way around the calendar.

"This is not the new normal," Brown said. "This is the new abnormal." —JUSTIN WORLAND

Clockwise from top left: a woman evacuates in Oak Park; a burning hospital in Paradise; fire retardant is dropped in Malibu; llamas find refuge on Malibu's Zuma Beach

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The View

POLITICS

WHO REALLY COUNTS

By Elise Jordan

A Republican operative of otherwise dubious election-year morality once told me his red line: strategies that attempt voter suppression must be rejected, always. Your candidate should not win by embracing tactics that represent the antithesis of democracy. Not in 2018. Not in America. And especially not in the Deep South.

INSIDE

WHAT HIGHER OIL PRICES WOULD REALLY MEAN FOR SAUDI ARABIA

THE LAWS THAT COULD HELP STOP MASS SHOOTERS

HOW SCIENCE MIGHT FIGHT HIV IN THE FUTURE

The region's blighted history of oppression against African Americans reveals what such a strategy truly is and why we must reject it.

During my time in Republican politics, I overlooked plenty of unseemly partisan warfare. But the voter suppression of our citizens that we've seen this year is something that no American can ignore.

A representative for Republican candidate for governor Brian Kemp called his opponent Stacey Abrams' unwillingness to concede before all votes were counted "a disgrace to democracy." But leaders like Kemp are the real disgrace. Abrams engaged new voters; in turn, Kemp openly said he'd like to suppress their participation. Kemp was also running while serving as secretary of state, the office that oversees elections, and resigned two days after balloting, only when challenged by a lawsuit.

Voters cast their ballots during early voting in Atlanta on Oct. 18

Unsurprisingly, it wasn't easy to vote in Georgia, because of broken voting machines, or functional machines with missing power cords, or too few machines—and, at the very least, hours-long lines. (A U.S. District judge characterized of Kemp's leadership in a ruling on Georgia's readiness: "The Defendants and State election officials had buried their heads in the sand.") If all this had occurred in Iraq or Afghanistan or Zimbabwe, American election monitors would protest the result.

But it happened here, in districts across the United States. Consider the rule that any Mississippians wishing to vote absentee in the Nov. 27 runoff would need to notarize their ballot during the week of the Thanksgiving holiday. Complicated voting procedures like these—designed to stunt turnout—are the modern-day equivalent of a poll tax.

Worse still, the responses of Republican officials, including the President, have made it clear that they missed the civics lesson explaining that elections need to be perceived as free and fair to establish the legitimacy of elected leadership. So far, the rare member of the party involved in a close contest who has acted in a manner worthy of that mandate is one who will not be serving: with her gracious concession, Arizona Senate candidate Martha McSally has been the lone outlier in a sea of Republicans crying fraud.

THAT AN ESTIMATED 113 million people—an increase of 30 million voters from the 2014 midterms—still turned out, despite this mess, demonstrated that Americans want to do their part. In Florida, citizens even expanded the number of people who can participate by reinstating the right to vote to 1.4 million former felons. This devotion deserves a fair process.

The needed reform isn't that complex. People like Kemp—and his counterparts in Kansas and Ohio who did the same, plus Florida Governor Rick Scott—have no business refereeing an election in which they're competing. Resign-to-run, or even recuse-to-run, laws should be universal. Additionally, former Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson has rightly suggested election infrastructure be categorized as critical, like the electric grid. And though I lean libertarian, I would also like to see a new national commission on voting; too many local and state authorities have a proven track record of incompetency.

This is not about abstract ideals. It is about how people live. These communities have paid with their lives and livelihoods throughout history to gain the right to vote. We cannot repay them with broken systems. In her seminal work, *The New Jim Crow,* Michelle Alexander writes that racism "functions naturally, almost invisibly (and sometimes with genuinely benign intent), when it is embedded in the structure of a social system." To tolerate this disenfranchisement is to be complicit in the worst of this nation's past.

I keep thinking about what Barbara Williams, a 58-year-old African-American retiree in Georgia, told the Associated Press. "It was important for me to vote … I'm a human being, and I have a life, and I try for it to be better." Those words are clarifying: anything short of counting every vote is an abnegation of America's founding promise as a nation built on the consent of the governed.

Jordan is a co-host of the Words Matter *podcast*

SHORT READS

Highlights from stories on **time.com/ideas**

An accurate Thanksgiving

Sean Sherman, author of *The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen* cookbook, encourages people to **put an end to the false narrative about the role of Native Americans in the holiday, and instead celebrate with indigenous cuisines:** "Exploring native foods brings a deeper understanding of the land we stand on."

Fighting for normalcy

As a valet at a hospital, Matthew Casteel **photographed the insides of veterans' cars to show the stuff behind their daily struggles.** "While the reality of war is something that may be hard for someone to wrap their mind around," writes TIME's Clara Mokri of the images, "the interior of a car is not."

Justices for the people

Former Senator John C. Danforth suggests Americans change how they approach the politics and procedure of selecting judges for the Supreme Court. For one, he suggests a simple rule: **"When [the people] elect a Republican President, they are choosing conservative Justices."**

JESSICA MCGOWAN—GETTY IMAGES

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THE RISK REPORT

The Saudis can fix oil prices. Can they repair the crown prince's image?

By Ian Bremmer

THE GLOBAL SUPPLY of oil might be about to shrink, and prices rise. Saudi Arabia's Energy Minister announced on Nov. 11 the kingdom would cut its oil production by 500,000 barrels per day in December. In the same month, the 15 nations that make up OPEC will likely confirm a coordinated move to push prices higher. Add the imposition of U.S. sanctions on Iran's oil exports that came into force on Nov. 5, lower production in crisis-plagued Venezuela and the risk that unrest may lower production in places like Libya and Nigeria, and oil could be set for a rebound.

Or maybe not. Before we prepare for a significant price surge, let's remember the reasons why oil prices have been sliding in recent weeks. Projections for oil demand are being revised downward for 2019, as the still escalating U.S.-China trade war raises fears of a sharp slowdown in economic growth across the Asia-Pacific region. And the Trump Administration has made it clear that high oil prices that push up gas prices for ordinary Americans are unwelcome. That's why the White House has exempted several countries from sanctions to allow them to continue to buy Iranian oil for at least another 180 days, easing the pressure on supply.

But the Saudi cuts are less about the future of global oil markets than about current anxieties among the Saudi royals. In particular, the cuts reveal the kingdom's fears that the Saudi murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in its Istanbul consulate will continue to poison attitudes of foreign investors toward the kingdom and its leadership. As more information emerges about what Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman knew about the killing, so too does the risk to funding for the Vision 2030 economic reform and diversification plan that is crucial for Saudi modernization. Less investment heightens the need for more oil revenue.

The Saudis can influence global oil prices by slowing production. If only it were so easy for the crown prince to repair the damage to his image. Yet there are steps he can take to present himself to the international community as a more responsible actor. He can make clear that he remains committed to the modernization of Saudi society, particularly by creating new opportunities for Saudi women within the kingdom's economy. He can pursue a cease-fire in the war in Yemen, or otherwise move to end the humanitarian crisis there. He can ease the political and economic blockade of Qatar, which he instigated 17 months ago to punish the emirate for its close ties with Iran and the negative media coverage from the Qatar-supported media network al-Jazeera. He can repair and improve relations with Turkey, whose President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has piled pressure on the crown prince over Khashoggi's death. He can quiet his aggressive criticism of Iran.

The Saudi cuts to oil production are less about the future of global markets than about current anxieties among the Saudi royals

Until now, the Saudis may have believed that building solid ties with President Donald Trump after years of frosty relations with his predecessor would allow the young Saudi crown prince to pursue an aggressive foreign policy in harmony with his aggressive bid to become king. The Khashoggi murder and the disastrously inept attempt to cover it up have changed all that. This latest move to cut oil production announces Saudi recognition of Saudi vulnerability. It's a welcome development for the stability of the Middle East, a region shaped by rivalry between Saudi Arabia, Iran and Turkey. Anything that makes the next Saudi king a bit less aggressive and a lot more circumspect should be considered good news. ◻

NATION

The next steps in gun control

After a shooting killed 12 people in California, on Nov. 7, the terror of mass shootings was compounded by a sense of hopelessness. But much can be done, especially if the public better understands what to demand of its governments.

On the prevention front, most people know to call for improved background-check systems and red-flag laws—both of which are essential. But they should also seek required permit renewals, which are common across the rest of the developed world and would address the problem that people do sometimes descend into a potentially violent tailspin after they acquire weapons.

There are also ways to make shootings less lethal. People are aware of the need to ban the sale of the most dangerous firearms—especially AR-15–style rifles. But as important is the need to restrict high-capacity magazines, which allow shooters to rain destruction on potential victims without interruption. Forcing a shooter to reload more frequently can provide both opportunities for counterattack and, crucially, for escape. *—John Donohue, the C. Wendell and Edith M. Carlsmith Professor of Law at Stanford University*

A memorial for the victims of the Thousand Oaks shooting

APU GOMES—AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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FRONTIERS OF MEDICINE

The future of HIV treatment might not involve pills

By Alice Park

HIV TREATMENTS HAVE COME A LONG WAY IN the more than 30 years since the virus was first identified. Powerful antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) can now keep the virus controlled at levels that current tests cannot detect in the blood. Perhaps just as important, people who take these drugs diligently soon after they're infected are unlikely to pass the virus to others. But the treatment isn't perfect. Those with HIV need to take a pill every day for the rest of their lives, and even if they do, the virus can easily morph to become resistant to the drugs. That's why patients on ARV treatment should faithfully monitor their virus and cycle between different combinations of drugs.

Finding new, easier ways to more effectively treat HIV and stop its spread is therefore an urgent priority, and researchers are now looking beyond daily drugs to therapies that might provide people with more lasting protection.

One path they're exploring is a long-acting, injectable version of anti-HIV drugs, which people would receive about every eight weeks. Like the daily pills, these drugs prevent HIV from making more copies of itself—but they are delivered in different formulations, including nanoparticles that allow small amounts to be released slowly over longer periods of time. Early studies have found that a combination of two long-acting drugs—cabotegravir and rilpivirine—can keep HIV suppressed to undetectable levels just as effectively as daily pill treatments. "It's a new way to think about treating people," says Dr. Joseph Eron, a professor of medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an investigator in the studies. If the final results prove as successful, the company expects to file for Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval in the coming year. Advocates for people with HIV are already proposing that the injections should be made available at pharmacies, retail clinics or mobile units to make it even easier for people to get long-term treatment.

A recent development in cancer care—in which the immune system is trained to target and destroy cancer cells—has inspired another approach for HIV. So far, a traditional vaccine has not worked against the virus, but this type of immunotherapy may generate the same immune response that a vaccine might.

The potential treatment relies on people with HIV who have a natural ability to fight the infection without drugs, mainly thanks to antibodies that their bodies make against the virus. Scientists are able to extract the neutralizing antibodies from the blood, multiply them in the lab and infuse an antibody solution into people with HIV. If the antibodies provide a strong and sustained enough immune response, the hope is that people may eventually be able to ditch their drugs completely.

ALREADY, THERE IS encouraging reason to believe the method might work, especially if the antibodies are combined with anti-HIV drugs started soon after a person is infected. In a small, early study published in 2018, 11 people who started taking traditional anti-HIV drugs sometime after their infection began were given neutralizing antibodies and taken off their drugs. Researchers found that nine were able to keep the virus at undetectable levels for 21 weeks, even after they stopped taking their anti-HIV pills. Two of them do not show any detectable HIV in the blood even a year later. This suggests that the immune system is effectively keeping the virus at bay by recognizing and dispatching the proper immune weapons to destroy HIV whenever it reappears in the body, which is precisely how a vaccine works. "The idea is not to train the immune system to do something it cannot do, but to make it do something better that it does already," says Dr. Michel Nussenzweig, a professor at Rockefeller University who oversaw the study.

These approaches are aimed at controlling HIV, not eliminating it entirely. But that too might be possible with a genetic tool called CRISPR. Like an extremely precise pair of molecular scissors, CRISPR can recognize and snip out HIV's viral genes from a cell that has been infected. So far, scientists have successfully cut out the HIV genes from mice and rats infected with the virus, as well as from infected human cells grown in a lab.

More studies are needed before this technique can be tested in people with HIV—or before any of these techniques are used to routinely treat infections. But they all provide more proof that taking a daily drug isn't the only way to treat HIV and reduce its spread. ☐

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The Nguyen family, in the early 1980s in San Jose, Calif., where his parents owned the New Saigon Mini Market; at bottom, Nguyen and his brother in Harrisburg, Pa.

Essay

AMERICAN LIKE ME

What it means to love my country, no matter how it feels about me

By Viet Thanh Nguyen

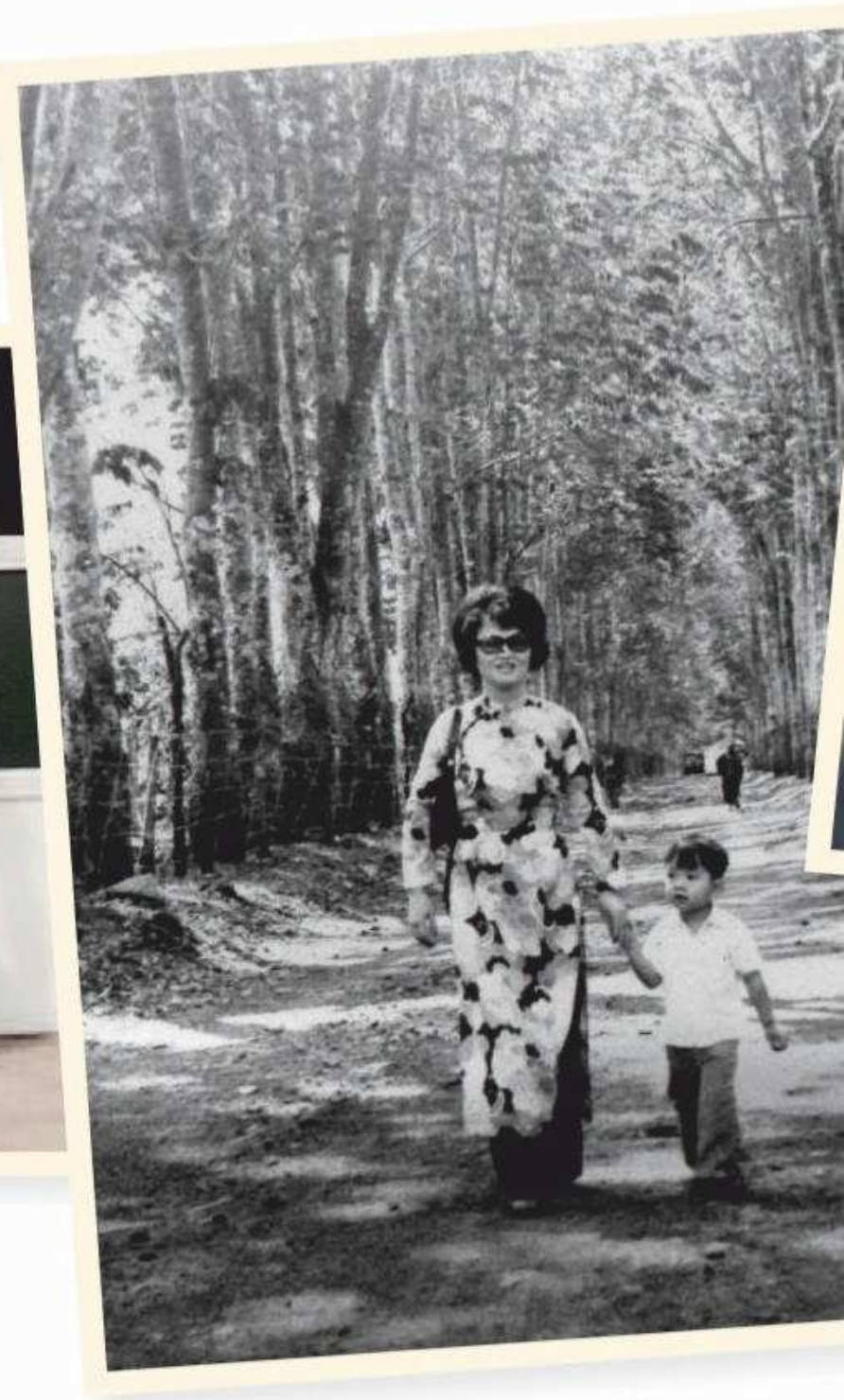
LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT. HAVE YOU HEARD SOMEONE SAY this? Or have you said it? Anyone who has heard these five words knows what it means, because *it* almost always refers to America. Anyone who has heard this sentence knows it is a loaded gun, pointed at them.

As for those who say this sentence, do you mean it with gentleness, with empathy, with sarcasm, with satire, with any kind of humor that is not ill humored? Or is the sentence always said with very clear menace?

I ask out of genuine curiosity, because I have never said this sentence myself, in reference to any country or place. I have never said "love it or leave it" to my son, and I hope I never will, because that is not the kind of love I want to feel, for him or for my country, whichever country that might be.

The country in which I am writing these words is France, which is not my country but which colonized Vietnam, where I was born, for two-thirds of a century.

Essay



The Nguyens came to the U.S. in 1975. Above, at their first house in Pennsylvania. Right, Nguyen with his mother in Vietnam, before they left for the U.S.

French rule ended only 17 years before my birth. My parents and their parents never knew anything but French colonialism. Perhaps because of this history, part of me loves France, a love that is due, in some measure, to having been mentally colonized by France.

Aware of my colonization, I do not love France the way many Americans love France, the ones who dream of the Eiffel Tower, of sipping coffee at Les Deux Magots, of eating a fine meal in Provence. This is a romantic love, set to accordion music or Édith Piaf, which I feel only fleetingly. I cannot help but see colonialism's legacies, visible throughout Paris if one wishes to see them: the people of African and Arab origins who are here because France was there in their countries of birth. Romanticizing their existence, oftentimes at the margins of French society, would be difficult, which is why Americans rarely talk about them as part of the fantasy of Paris.

The fantasy is tempting, especially because of my Vietnamese history. Most of the French of Vietnamese origins I know are content, even if they are aware of their colonized history. Why wouldn't they be? A Moroccan friend in Paris points to the skin I share with these French of Vietnamese ancestry and says, "You are white here." But I am not white in America, or not yet. I was made in America but born in Vietnam, and my origins are inseparable from three wars: the one the Vietnamese fought against the French; the one the Vietnamese fought against each other; and the one the U.S. fought in Vietnam.

Many Americans consider the war to be a noble, if possibly flawed, example of American good intentions. And while there is some truth to that, it was also simply a continuation of French colonization, a war that was racist and imperialist at its roots and in its practices. As such, this war was just one manifestation of a centuries-long expansion of the American empire that began from its own colonial birth and ran through the frontier, the American West, Mexico, Hawaii, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and now the Middle East.

One war might be a mistake. A long series of wars is a pattern. Indians were the original terrorists in the American imagination. The genocide committed against them by white settlers is Thanksgiving's ugly side, not quite remembered but not really forgotten, even in France, where images of a half-naked Native

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY VIET THANH NGUYEN

From left: Nguyen with his father in front of San Jose city hall after his hometown's city council honored him in 2016; Nguyen as a child in Ban Me Thuot, circa 1974; Nguyen as a teen in 1987

American in a feathered headdress can also be found. Centuries later, the latent memory of genocide—or the celebration of conquest—would surface when American GIs called hostile Vietnamese territory "Indian country." Now Muslims are the new gooks while terrorists are the new communists, since communists are no longer very threatening and every society needs an Other to define its boundaries and funnel its fears.

MANY AMERICANS DO NOT LIKE to hear these things. An American veteran of the war, an enlisted man, wrote me in rage after reading an essay of mine on the scars that Vietnamese refugees carried. Americans had sacrificed themselves for my country, my family, me, he said. I should be grateful. When I wrote him back and said he was the only one hurt by his rage, he wrote back with an even angrier letter. Another American veteran, a former officer, now a dentist and doctor, read my novel *The Sympathizer* and sent me a letter more measured in tone but with a message just as blunt. You seem to love the communists so much, he said. Why don't you go back to Vietnam? And take your son with you.

I was weary and did not write back to him. I should have. I would have pointed out that he must not have finished my novel, since the last quarter indicts communism's failures in Vietnam. Perhaps he never made it past being offended by the first quarter of the novel, which condemns America's war in Vietnam. Perhaps he never made it to the middle of the novel, by which point I was also satirizing the failures of the government under which I was born, the Republic of Vietnam, the south.

I made such criticisms not because I hated all the countries that I have known but because I love them. My love for my countries is difficult because their histories, like those of all countries, are complicated. Every country believes in its own best self and from these visions has built beautiful cultures, France included. And yet every country is also soiled in the blood of conquest and violence, Vietnam included. If we love our countries, we owe it to them not just to flatter them but to tell the truth about them in all their beauty and their brutality, America included.

If I had written that letter, I would have asked this dentist and doctor why he had to threaten my son, who was born in America. His citizenship is natural,

The author and his son Ellison, then 3, in 2016

which is as good as the citizenship of the dentist, the doctor and the veteran. And yet even my son is told to love it or leave it. Is such a telling American? Yes. And no. "Love it or leave it" is completely American and yet un-American at the same time, just like me.

Unlike my son, I had to become naturalized. Did I love America at the time of my naturalization? It is hard to say, because I had never said "I love you" to anyone, my parents included, much less a country. But I still wanted to swear my oath of citizenship to America as an adolescent. At the same time, I wanted to keep my Vietnamese name. I had tried various American names on for size. All felt unnatural. Only the name my parents gave me felt natural, possibly because my father never ceased telling me, "You are 100% Vietnamese."

By keeping my name, I could be made into an American but not forget that I was born in Vietnam. Paradoxically, I also believed that by keeping my name, I was making a commitment to America. Not the America of those who say "love it or leave it," but to my America, to an America that I would force to say my name, rather than to an America that would force a name on me.

Naming my own son was then a challenge. I wanted an American name for him that expressed the complexities of our America. I chose Ellison, after the great writer Ralph Waldo Ellison, himself named after Ralph Waldo Emerson, the great philosopher. My son's genealogy would be black and white, literary and philosophical, African American and American. This genealogy gestures at the greatness of America and the horror of it as well, the democracy as well as the slavery. Some Americans like to believe that the greatness has succeeded the horror, but to me, the greatness and the horror exist simultaneously, as they have from the very beginning of our American history and perhaps to its end. A name like Ellison compresses the beauty and the brutality of America into seven letters, a summation of despair and hope.

I COULD NEVER GO BACK TO VIETNAM FOR GOOD, BECAUSE I COULD NEVER BE A WRITER THERE AND SAY THE THINGS I SAY WITHOUT BEING SENT TO PRISON

THIS IS A HEAVY BURDEN to lay on one's son, although it is no heavier than the burden placed on me by my parents. My first name is that of the Vietnamese people, whose patriotic mythology says we have suffered for centuries to be independent and free. And yet today Vietnam, while being independent, is hardly free. I could never go back to Vietnam for good, because I could never be a writer there and say the things I say without being sent to prison.

So I choose the freedom of America, even at a time when "love it or leave it" is no longer just rhetorical. The current Administration is threatening even naturalized citizens with denaturalization and deportation. Perhaps it is not so far-fetched to imagine that one day someone like me, born in Vietnam, might be sent back to Vietnam, despite having made more out of myself than many native-born Americans. If so, I would not take my son with

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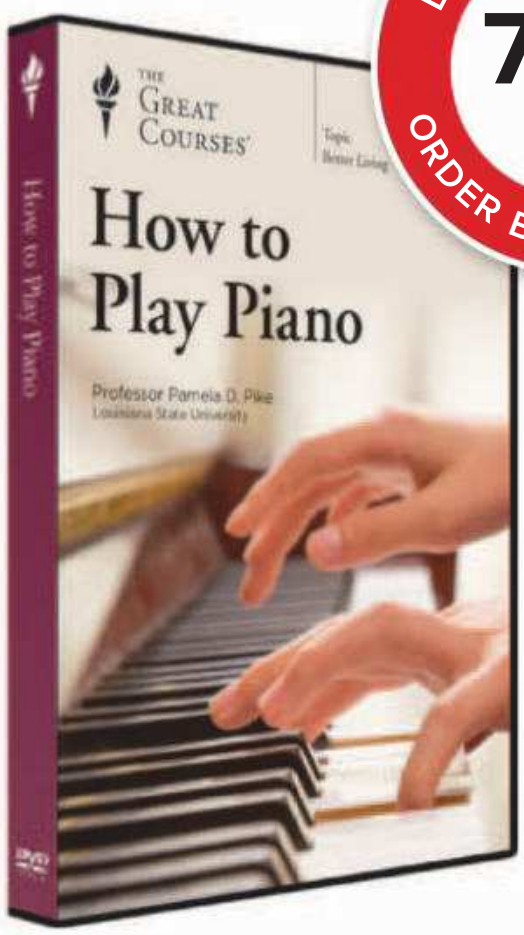

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me. Vietnam is not his country. America is his country, and perhaps he will know for it a love that will be less complicated and more intuitive than mine.

He will also—I hope—know a father's love that is less complicated than mine. I never said "I love you" when I was growing up because my parents never said "I love you" to me. That does not mean they did not love me. They loved me so much that they worked themselves to exhaustion in their new America. I hardly ever got to see them. When I did, they were too tired to be joyful. Still, no matter how weary they were, they always made dinner, even if dinner was often just boiled organ meat. I grew up on intestine, tongue, tripe, liver, gizzard and heart. But I was never hungry.

The memory of that visceral love, expressed in sacrifice, is in the marrow of my bones. A word or a tone can make me feel the deepness of that love, as happened to me when I overheard a conversation one day in my neighborhood drugstore in Los Angeles. The man next to me was Asian, not handsome, plainly dressed. He spoke southern Vietnamese on his cell phone. *"Con oi, Ba day. Con an com chua?"* He looked a little rough, perhaps working class. But when he spoke to his child in Vietnamese, his voice was very tender. What he said cannot be translated. It can only be felt.

Literally, he said, "Hello, child. This is your father. Have you eaten rice yet?" That means nothing in English, but in Vietnamese it means everything. *"Con oi, Ba day. Con an com chua?"* This is how hosts greet guests who come to the home, by asking them if they have eaten. This was how parents, who would never say "I love you," told their children they loved them. I grew up with these customs, these emotions, these intimacies, and when I heard this man say this to his child, I almost cried. This is how I know that I am still Vietnamese, because my history is in my blood and my culture is my umbilical cord. Even if my Vietnamese is imperfect, which it is, I am still connected to Vietnam and to Vietnamese refugees worldwide.

And yet, when I was growing up, some Vietnamese Americans would tell me I was not really Vietnamese because I did not speak perfect Vietnamese. Such a statement is a cousin of "love it or leave it." But there should be many ways of being Vietnamese, just as there are many ways of being French, many ways of being American. For me, as long as I feel Vietnamese, as long as Vietnamese things move me, I am still Vietnamese. That is how I feel the love of country for Vietnam, which is one of my countries, and that is how I feel my Vietnamese self.

In claiming that defiant Vietnamese self, one that disregards anyone else's definition, I claim my American self too. Against all those who say "love it or leave it," who offer only one way to be American, I insist on the America that allows me to be Vietnamese and is enriched by the love of others. So it is that every day I ask my son if he has eaten yet and every day I tell my son I love him. This is how love of country and love of family do not differ. I want to create a family where I will never say "love it or leave it" to my son, just as I want a country that will never say the same to anyone.

I WANT TO CREATE A FAMILY WHERE I WILL NEVER SAY 'LOVE IT OR LEAVE IT' TO MY SON, JUST AS I WANT A COUNTRY THAT WILL NEVER SAY THE SAME TO ANYONE

Most Americans will not feel what I feel when they hear the Vietnamese language, but they feel the love of country in their own ways. Perhaps they feel that deep, emotional love when they see the flag or hear the national anthem. I admit that those symbols mean little to me, because they divide as much as unify. Too many people, from the highest office in the land down, have used those symbols to essentially tell all Americans to love it or leave it.

Being immune to the flag and the anthem does not make me less American than those who love those symbols. Is it not more important that I love the substance behind those symbols rather than the symbols themselves? The principles. Democracy, equality, justice, hope, peace and especially freedom, the freedom to write and to think whatever I want, even if my freedoms and the beauty of those principles have all been nurtured by the blood of genocide, slavery, conquest, colonization, imperial war, forever war. All of that is America, our beautiful and brutal America.

I DID NOT UNDERSTAND the contradiction that was our America during my youth in San Jose, Calif., in the 1970s and 1980s. Back then I only wanted to be American in the simplest way possible, partly in resistance against my father's demand that I be 100% Vietnamese. My father felt that deep love for his country because he had lost it when we fled Vietnam as refugees in 1975. If my parents held on to their Vietnamese identity and culture fiercely, it was only because they wanted their country back, a sentiment that many Americans would surely understand.

Then the U.S. re-established relations with Vietnam in 1994, and my parents took the first opportunity to go home. They went twice, without me, to visit a country that was just emerging from postwar poverty and desperation. Whatever they saw in their homeland, it affected my father deeply. After the second trip, my parents never again returned to Vietnam. Instead, over the next Thanksgiving dinner, my father said, "We're Americans now."

At last, my father had claimed America. I should have been elated, and part of me was as we sat before our exotic meal of turkey, mashed potatoes and cranberry sauce, which my brother had bought from a supermarket because no one in my family knew how to cook these specialties that we ate only once a year. But if I also felt uneasy, it was because I could not help but wonder: Which America was it? ☐

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Nation

GIVE ME SHELTER

Tens of thousands of people cross the border every year in search of asylum in America. Who among them should get to stay?

By Maya Rhodan

U.S. Border Patrol agents arrest a group of 43 Central American migrants, including children, on a roadside in McAllen, Texas, during a predawn patrol in late September

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN FRANCIS PETERS FOR TIME

It is still dark out when Border Patrol agent Herman Rivera's

radio crackles to life. His fellow agents, posted nearby on levee roads above the Rio Grande, report movement along the border with Mexico in the dim predawn. As the first rays of sunlight creep across the horizon, the team bursts into action, charging down into the scrub, dodging bushes and ducking under low-hanging branches in pursuit of migrants. Helicopter blades whomp overhead. "I've got one over here," an agent yells from a field where stalks of sugarcane tower over his head. "I've got two over here," screams another. They emerge a beat later with a line of men in handcuffs. Elsewhere, agents discover four more migrants, three from China and one from Guatemala, hiding in thick underbrush.

But not all of those who come across the border with Mexico run or hide. Hours later, as the sun reaches its midday peak, Rivera stands overlooking the river, watching as two men climb into an inflatable raft and paddle toward the U.S. shore. He doesn't call for backup—there will be no need to chase these two. They approach Rivera's truck, smiling broadly. They are a father and son, both named Fredy, they explain. They've been traveling for 13 days from Nicaragua and say they can't go back. In the simple words of those fleeing their homes in search of security—a language as old as human history itself—they ask for asylum in America.

For Rivera and the U.S. immigration system he serves, the Fredys pose a more complicated challenge than many of the others detained that morning. Those caught crossing the border in search of work, looking to reunite with family members or smuggling contraband face a legal process that is relatively swift and noncontroversial. In most cases, they're arrested, listed for expedited deportation and sent back to their home country without fanfare. But as asylum seekers, families like Fredy and Fredy qualify for a fair hearing under a decades-old refugee law.

The number of asylum seekers has skyrocketed. In 2008, according to federal data, fewer than 5,000 people apprehended by border agents expressed fear of returning home, thereby triggering the asylum process. Ten years later, that number has soared to more than 97,000—a nearly 2,000% increase. The figure has doubled in the past two years alone, driven by the arrivals of families and unaccompanied minors.

Some immigration-rights advocates explain this uptick by pointing at world events—environmental devastation, gang activity and political volatility in much of Central America. They say that the U.S., a nation founded by religious refugees, is built on a proud tradition of sheltering those facing persecution and that we should make room for as many as we can, whatever the source of their fear.

President Donald Trump and many of his supporters see things differently. They argue that our asylum laws are being exploited, that the migrants who file for refugee status are only pretending to flee oppression as a way to sneak into the country through a legal back door. "[Asylum] is an escape hatch from the laws that Congress has passed regulating immigration," says Mark Krikorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, a think tank that advocates for lower immigration.

The Trump Administration is waging a policy war against asylum seekers. Its first big move was the family-separation policy that was designed to deter asylum-seeking families. In June, former Attorney General Jeff Sessions narrowed the U.S. asylum criteria to disqualify victims of gang or domestic violence. In October, the Trump Administration ordered thousands of active-duty troops to Texas, California and Arizona to confront a so-called caravan of Central Americans, including many likely asylum seekers, who are making their way by foot to the border. In November, Trump issued a new rule that will bar all migrants for 90 days from seeking asylum if they do not come through designated ports of entry.

The political drama has fueled a deeper, more unsettling debate that gets to the heart of what kind of a country America wants to be. On the right, immigration hard-liners promise to vanquish migrant "invaders," while on the left, activists threaten, in a snowballing hashtag campaign, to #AbolishICE in its entirety, a reference to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Almost imperceptible beneath the shouting are two questions that—if the country were able to figure out how to answer them—could settle the fight: To whom should America give asylum, and how can we humanely and responsibly grant it to them, while denying it to others?

For now, those questions will be temporarily addressed in court and on the border. Immigrant-rights activists say Trump's latest policy moves are not just cruel but illegal. A day after the White House announced the latest rule change, a coalition led by the American Civil Liberties Union filed suit to block it—the latest of many suits levied against the Administration on behalf of asylum seekers this year. And every morning, from Texas to California, border agents will scramble to keep up. "It doesn't matter if we deploy a wall or a fence or bring in more helicopters—this group of people is turning themselves in to us," says Manuel Padilla Jr., chief of the Rio Grande Valley Sector and a 34-year veteran of the Border Patrol. "This situation is not sustainable."

Miriam Castillo Castillo, next to her young niece, speaks with a border officer after crossing the river to McAllen on Sept. 25; members of their group said they were fleeing politically motivated violence at home

A SHORT DRIVE from Rivera's post at the border, a stream of migrants, wearing GPS-tracking ankle bracelets, file into the Rio Grande Valley Humanitarian Respite Center, which is run by the nonprofit Catholic Charities in McAllen, Texas. This group of exhausted migrants is made up of family units, like the two Fredys, and all have sought asylum. Slumped into rows of blue plastic chairs and clutching bags emblazoned with the words DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, they are at the beginning of a long process—one that's become vastly more complicated over the past 80 years.

Until the 1940s, the U.S. did not have a policy governing the admission of would-be refugees: federal laws didn't distinguish between immigrants and asylum seekers. But after World War II left 7 million people uprooted in Europe, U.S. lawmakers were forced to act. In 1948, Congress passed the Displaced Persons Act, opening America's immigration door to some 350,000 refugees from Europe over the next four years. In 1967, the U.S. signed the U.N. refugee protocols, voluntarily committing to protections for refugees.

Those protocols define refugees as people who are outside their country and afraid to return because of a well-founded fear of persecution based on religion, race, nationality or membership in a particular social or political group. But refugee status was for decades granted unequally through loopholes and exceptions to politically sympathetic groups, like those fleeing communist regimes in Hungary or Cuba, or escaping the crisis created by the Vietnam War. It wasn't until the Refugee Act of 1980 that Congress created a comprehensive system for granting asylum in the U.S. If the criteria outlined in the U.N. refugee protocol were met, any applicant could be welcomed in the U.S.

In practice, that system often kicks in when people like the Fredys come face to face with immigration authorities and express a fear of returning to their home country. A trained U.S. official then interviews them to judge whether their fears are believable. In fiscal year 2018, roughly 89% of asylum seekers passed this initial "credible fear" screening, according to federal data. But the odds narrow from there. Asylum seekers are assigned a date to plead their case in immigration court, which imposes a high burden of proof. This year, judges granted asylum in only 17% of cases decided in immigration court where migrants had passed credible-fear interviews.

What happens to asylum seekers who are not granted refugee status? That's where the political fight really heats up. The Trump Administration says the problem is that after asylum seekers pass their credible-fear interviews, they are released from

custody to await their date in immigration court—a system Trump calls "catch and release." With a backlog of 791,821 cases, new court dates are often months or years in the future. In fiscal year 2018, immigration judges completed just over 34,000 cases originating with a credible-fear referral, according to federal data. In nearly a third of those cases—10,534—migrants failed to show up at their scheduled court hearing.

Krikorian, the immigration hard-liner, sees evidence of bad faith at every stage of the asylum process. "Half of the people who say they have a fear and want to apply for asylum never bother after they are let go into the country," he says. From 2008 to 2018, 53% of migrants who submitted to a credible-fear interview actually filed for asylum, according to federal data. He also claims that some who do apply for asylum expect to be denied but can benefit in the meanwhile: if more than 180 days elapse without a decision on a migrant's immigration case, the migrant becomes eligible for a work permit. "They know they are going to be turned down," he says, "but they get a year or two in the U.S. while they're working."

Padilla, the longtime Border Patrol chief, argues asylum seekers should be held in detention until their court date. The population of asylum seekers "keeps growing exponentially because they're actually being released into the community," he says. Sessions has made a similar case, suggesting that releasing immigrants as they pursue asylum claims creates "incentives for illegal aliens to come here and claim a fear of return." In October, Trump told Fox News that he would build "tent cities" to house migrants until they could face a judge. "We're going to put tents up all over the place," he said.

THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY SECTOR, which stretches over 34 counties and 34,000 sq. mi. of southeast Texas, is patrolled by a small army of roughly 3,000 Border Patrol agents. Over the years, many have grown accustomed to the flow of unauthorized immigration by studying the variegated landscape, honing their tracking skills and swapping advice. After patrolling a section of the river, Rivera says, agents will sometimes pull piles of tires behind their trucks to refresh the ground so it's easier to spot the dusty footprints. He tells a story of identifying a group of ostensible joggers as undocumented migrants by a telltale necklace that one of them wore.

Still, the job of a Border Patrol agent remains Sisyphean. In October, agents arrested 50,975 migrants along the southwestern border—23,121 were family units, marking the highest one-month total on record. But as much as hard-liners may want to arrest all of them, immigration lawyers and advocates argue that prolonged detention of asylum seekers simply won't work. They admit detention can deter some migrants, but only at great cost. First, the ACLU has

A U.S. Border Patrol agent searches for a group of migrants who had crossed the Rio Grande from Mexico near McAllen, in September

argued in lawsuits that the prolonged detention of asylum seekers violates both a 2009 ICE directive and the U.N. Refugee Convention. Second, detaining more asylum seekers is expensive. On average, it costs $319 per person per day to detain migrant families, according to DHS. With long wait times for court dates, that will add up. Releasing migrants with ankle monitors and enrolling them in case-management programs have proved to be cheaper and more effective than detention. The Trump Administration ended one such initiative in 2017.

Perhaps the most important issue, advocates say, is that the prolonged detention of asylum seekers is immoral. Many travel as families with young children and babies. Do Americans really want to become a nation that jails hundreds of thousands of impoverished families in makeshift camps along its

southern border because a portion, if released into the country, might not go through the court system to test their asylum claims?

As it turns out, both political parties bear some blame for the current mess. The crisis arguably began in 2014, under President Barack Obama, when an influx of unaccompanied minors and families crossed the southern border. The flow has increased under Trump. But instead of boosting funding to hire the many more immigration judges and administrators necessary to efficiently process asylum seekers, Trump and Obama focused disproportionately on immigration enforcement. That may have earned both Presidents political chits among rule-of-law voters, but it didn't do much to expedite the asylum process or address the root of the problem, says Doris Meissner, director of the Immigration Policy Program at the Migration Policy Institute.

One straightforward way to stem the current influx of asylum seekers, Meissner says, would be to streamline the immigration bureaucracy. The U.S. should publicize a clear definition of who qualifies for asylum, what criteria will be considered in hearings and an explanation of what it takes to prove your case for refugee status. The Justice Department, Meissner says, should bolster immigration courts so they can judge asylum claims more quickly and fairly and eliminate the case backlog. A broken immigration-justice system leaves migrants vulnerable and "invites misuse" of the system, she says.

Paying for more judges and other immigration officials will be expensive, advocates admit, but less so than other politically motivated solutions, like sending thousands of active-duty U.S. troops to the southern border. To counter the migrant caravan, which is expected to arrive at the border this month, Trump has already deployed 5,600 troops, according to Defense Department officials, and he has promised up to 15,000 total. The Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, an independent analysis group, estimated that such an effort will likely cost $42 million to $110 million.

Eleanor Acer, senior director of refugee protection at Human Rights First, says any lasting solution to the migrant crisis should also address the root of the problem: poverty, violence and instability in the countries from which many of these people are fleeing. "Until the human-rights abuses and violence and deprivations and underlying issues are addressed, people will continue to flee their countries," she says. "We actually have to deal with the problems that are causing people to leave their homes." She recommends investing in jobs, economic development and other long-term foreign-aid programs.

Back in the Rio Grande Valley Sector, Padilla, the longtime border agent who calls for detaining asylum seekers until their court hearings, agrees that any viable solution should deal with all the sources of the problem. It's not enough to scare people into not coming to the U.S., he says. "There have been efforts, Band-Aid efforts, to deal with this population during both Administrations," he says, referring to the Obama and Trump presidencies. "But immigration reform has not happened to really deal with it."

Until that solution comes, agent Rivera says, he and his colleagues will continue doing the work they do, monitoring the thickets at dawn, walking the riverbank and arresting and processing the migrants they find. At the end of a long, warm afternoon, Rivera's radio comes alive again. An agent's voice crackles over the line. A family of five have been caught crossing the border, he says. They have asked for asylum. Rivera speeds to the scene. ☐

Nation

THE LONG WAIT

At the border, U.S. troops have no enemy to confront and plenty of time to kill

By W.J. Hennigan/Nogales

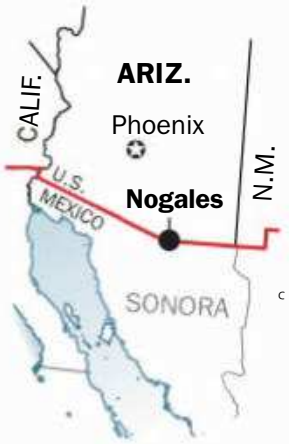
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MERIDITH KOHUT FOR TIME

Soldiers of the 104th Engineer Construction Company weld brackets along the border wall in Nogales, Ariz.

It was quiet in Nogales, Ariz., before the soldiers appeared. A line of

armored vehicles rumbled through the morning stillness of the dusty border town, past its fading Old West–style storefronts and groups of curious locals who stepped into the autumn air to watch the convoy roll to a stop. American troops leaped to the pavement, clad in helmets, combat boots and camouflage fatigues. Wiping sleep from their eyes, the soldiers sized up their task: welding coils of razor wire atop the city's 20-ft.-tall border fence with Mexico.

Everything felt out of place. The Army's 104th Engineer Construction Company, based at Fort Hood, typically builds roads for hulking military vehicles in remote combat zones like Iraq and Afghanistan. But since Election Day, Nov. 6, they've been working on the border fence in Nogales, down the street from Kory's bridal store. It isn't a mission the troops are trained or equipped to do: the seven bulldozers, two excavators and other heavy equipment they hauled from central Texas have proved useless. Instead, they have been figuring it out on the fly, executing orders handed down by the Commander in Chief, President Donald Trump.



On one level, those orders seemed straightforward: protect the U.S. against what Trump calls "an invasion" by a caravan of impoverished Central American migrants traveling north through Mexico. But the soldiers don't plan to meet the caravan with force. In fact, they say, doing so would be illegal. Since the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, the U.S. military has been forbidden to take part in domestic law enforcement. Instead, the 104th Engineer Construction Company is doing its best to provide planning assistance, engineering support, equipment and resources to the Department of Homeland Security.

Similar scenes have played out across the Southwest since Trump issued his orders on Oct. 26. Some 7,000 active-duty troops began to flood border communities from San Diego to Brownsville, Texas, a deployment that equals the troops fighting ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Not since the days when General John "Black Jack" Pershing pursued the Mexican revolutionary Pancho Villa in 1916 has a comparable number of active-duty soldiers converged along the southern frontier for a mission.

Trump is fond of saying you can't be a country without a border. But what has the President's deployment shown us about who we are as a nation

in 2018? Three days of observing, talking and shivering with military units in Arizona shows a country not defined by its border but deeply divided by it: we remain uncertain about the place of immigrants in our communities, what's needed to protect ourselves and how to apply our values to our politics.

The confusion comes at a price. The estimated cost of the border deployment is expected to total more than $220 million, U.S. officials say (outside estimates are somewhat lower). Critics deride the mission as a political stunt that served no purpose other than to rally Trump's base ahead of the elections. "It's a waste of time," says Chuck Hagel, a former U.S. Defense Secretary, Republican Senator from Nebraska and Vietnam War veteran. "It's clear to me that he's using the military as political pawns, which is completely irresponsible."

But the midterms are over now, Trump has stopped tweeting about the caravan, and the troops

Soldiers eat dinner in the chow tent, where a Thanksgiving meal would be served, in Sunglow City, an outpost constructed in Tucson, Ariz.

are still here, still out of place. On short notice, they flew from their bases to the border and built tent cities from nothing in the middle of nowhere. They established running water, electricity, working toilets. And they're prepared to stay for weeks, patiently waiting, as the caravan inches closer and their own families celebrate Thanksgiving, and possibly Christmas, back home without them.

RESPONDING TO THE CARAVAN took on renewed urgency for Trump on Oct. 19, when he saw television footage of thousands of migrants storming Mexico's border gate with Guatemala. By then, the President had grown increasingly agitated at the limits of his power to stop illegal crossings. His vision of forcing Mexico to fund a massive border-wall construction project was stymied first by geopolitical realities, and then by Congress. As the midterm elections approached, he was itching for a way to show voters he was tough on the border and to goad Democrats into a debate on immigration policy.

The images presented an opening. Trump demanded U.S. military officials come up with a plan to prevent something similar from happening at U.S. ports of entry, and midlevel officials at Homeland Security and the Pentagon began drafting a plan. On Oct. 25, Trump fired off a 6 a.m. tweet: "I am bringing out the military for this National Emergency. They will be stopped!"

The topic became a fixture at the President's campaign rallies, where "Build the wall" made for a crowd-rousing slogan and references to "birthright citizenship" reliably drew boos. National exit polls found the share of voters worried about immigration was about 23%, and Trump's closing midterm argument targeted them, even as Republican strategists suggested he focus on the healthy economy instead. "At this very moment, large well-organized caravans

BORDER BUILDUP

President Trump is sending more than 7,000 active-duty troops to the southern border to protect against what he calls an "invasion" by a migrant caravan traveling north through Mexico. U.S. active-duty forces haven't deployed to the border since the late 1990s.

The last two Presidents sent reserves from the National Guard:

BUSH

OPERATION JUMP START
JUNE 2006–JULY 2008

6,000
National Guard members

Assisted in apprehending
186,814
undocumented immigrants and seizing
316,364 lb.
of marijuana

OBAMA

OPERATION PHALANX
JULY 2010–JUNE 2011

1,200
National Guard members

Assisted in apprehending
17,887
undocumented immigrants and seizing
56,342 lb.
of marijuana

NOTE: OPERATION PHALANX WAS EXTENDED AFTER JUNE 2011, PROVIDING AERIAL SURVEILLANCE SUPPORT; SOURCES: GAO; DOD

of migrants are marching toward our southern border. Some people call it an invasion," Trump said Nov. 1, less than a week before Election Day. "These are tough people in many cases: a lot of young men, strong men and a lot of men that maybe we don't want in our country."

While members of the caravan rested their blistered feet in Mexico City in the first week of November, Trump ordered the U.S. military to fan out across the Southwest. Army Captain Charles Matthews, 40, had less than a week to prepare his troops for the deployment. Usually such orders come with four or five months' lead time, but Matthews didn't have that luxury. He tasked First Sergeant Brian Rethage, 40, with going through the company's rolls and figuring out who was available to go. After weeding out those with medical or other issues, Rethage came up with about 130 deployable troops. Matthews broke the news to those soldiers: they were going to Arizona and might not be back in time for the holidays.

The next problem: deciphering what the mission was exactly. Unclear on the details, Matthews brought what he thought he might need: bulldozers, excavators, scrapers, rollers and graders, all loaded onto semitrucks and sent off on the 888-mile trek from Fort Hood to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Tucson, Ariz. "We made an assumption that we would be doing horizontal earthwork: improving roads, you know, something in our wheelhouse," he says. "We came out here and found we were wrong."

It turned out the mission was to tighten security at two border locations in Nogales, the DeConcini Crossing and the Mariposa Crossing. The border fence splits the city in two: one side of town is in the U.S., the other is in Mexico. It's made up of 20-ft. steel slats that snake up hills and down into valleys, running parallel to city streets. Instead of land movers and construction equipment, Matthews needed miles of razor wire, brackets to hang the wire from, welding machines to secure the brackets and construction lifts to get his soldiers up and down.

Getting the material and equipment was just the start. Only eight of 130 troops knew how to weld. ("By design," he says. "My company is not trained to weld.") The baskets on the cherry pickers used to lift the soldiers to the top of the fence weren't suitable for the work, so the troops had to construct new ones from discarded wooden pallets. Then the team realized the sparks from the welder were falling on taxis parked behind the fence, on the Mexican side of the border. So Matthews' troops draped a 12-ft.-long wet rag from the basket to swallow the sparks. "This is a nonstandard engineering mission," Matthews says. "But we're engineers. We solve problems."

From sunrise to sundown, the company welded the brackets and affixed the razor wire, under the watch of bemused residents. In the past, the fence never stopped the people of Nogales from moving back and forth across the border for shopping, doctors appointments, family visits or daily work. The locals have a saying: *"Ambos Nogales."* In English it means "Nogales Together." But the presence of the troops underscored the permanence of the fence and what it has come to represent.

EACH DAY, THE MIGRANT CARAVAN trudges nearer. It began in the Honduran city of San Pedro Sula on Oct. 12 and reached the Mexican capital nearly four weeks later, populated by migrants traveling through rain and heat. The caravan's 5,000 people—many of them parents, children and unaccompanied minors—say they are fleeing violence and poverty in Central America. They travel together because there's safety in numbers: migrants have been kidnapped, raped or even killed. Two other, smaller caravans have since formed to follow the first. Many members will split from the group in Mexico. Others will travel the remaining miles to reach the U.S. border and apply for asylum.

To some in Nogales, they would be welcome. It is ironic, officials there say, their city needs more, not less, traffic from Mexico right now. Trump's crack-

Razor wire is used to help protect a shipping container holding guns and sensitive materiel

down has slowed the number of people crossing the border into Nogales to a trickle. In the past 10 years, annual pedestrian crossings into Nogales have dropped to 2.7 million from 7.7 million. That lack of foot traffic has resulted in the closure of some 15 stores in and around Morley Avenue, the city's main commercial drag, the officials say.

Santa Cruz County supervisor Bruce Bracker closed his family's retail shop in 2018; it had been open for 94 years. He argued that the years-long Border Patrol staffing shortages at Southwest ports of entry posed the largest security threat to border towns, such as Nogales. "The connotation of razor wire in our city is depressing. It looks like a prison," Bracker says. "I get that illegal immigration is a problem. It needs to be addressed. But America is supposed to set an example for the world on these sorts of issues. Shutting down asylum claims and deploying the military to the border isn't the solution. It's the beginning of another problem."

The members of the 104th Engineer Construction Company avoid such debates. They aren't the only troops on hand. Military police stand ready to defend the engineers should something go awry. But they don't anticipate facing any enemy other than the weather, the fragility of their equipment or the lure of fast-food restaurants. "We're not here to stop the migrant caravan," says Colonel Larry Dewey, commander of the 16th Military Police Brigade from Fort Bragg, N.C. "We're here to make sure they come through in an orderly manner."

The Nogales detachment is part of a 1,500-troop deployment in Arizona. Most of them are stationed 75 miles from Nogales at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, where they've constructed a 77-sq.-acre outpost called Sunglow City. That base, if you squint hard enough, is indistinguishable from ones like it in Iraq or Afghanistan, a logistical feat sprawled across the desert. The Army spread 1,700 tons of gravel over an area that features 140 tents, 150 portable toilets, a 20-bed hospital, a gym, laundry service and eight trailers packed with 15 hot showers each. Soldiers can watch TV while they wait their turn.

IF IT FEELS like a base on the other side of the world, it's not. Every day, the troops are reminded they're deployed deep in their own homeland. Restaurants and bars just outside the base gates are off-limits

because the soldiers are considered to be on a deployment. Some younger soldiers have been overheard complaining that they are prohibited from going off base to eat at a nearby Chili's. The Army plans to serve the troops a Thanksgiving dinner—with turkey and trimmings provided by contract caterers—on the base at Davis-Monthan. Soldiers will phone home or Skype with their loved ones. Some are single parents; their children will mark the holiday back home with temporary guardians.

Those who have served in combat operations overseas know any comparison to the ongoing wars is laughable. "This isn't a deployment," says Staff Sergeant Tamara Bonner, 38, of Fayetteville, N.C., who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. "We're carrying out a mission, but this isn't a deployment."

Nearby, more than two dozen heavily armored vehicles, including Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, sit parked, collecting dust under the desert sun. There's little chance they will be used here. Troops in Sunglow City often find themselves with little to do. They fill the time throwing a football around, texting their girlfriends, exercising or waiting for the outdoor mess hall to open. But experienced Pentagon hands on base recognize one group that has profited from the vehicles' dispatch to Sunglow City: the private contractors who were paid to haul them there from Texas.

Back in Nogales, the soldiers are making steady progress on the wall. Three days after U.S. soldiers started putting up the razor wire in Nogales, their work was put to the test. On Nov. 9, a Mexican man tried jumping the fence through a gap in the wire. U.S. Border Patrol agents immediately responded. The man tried to scramble back over the wall but got entangled in the newly emplaced coils, U.S. Customs and Border Protection confirmed to TIME. As the Border Patrol agents closed in, the man freed himself and made it back into Mexico.

When the mission was announced Oct. 29, it was called Operation Faithful Patriot. Nine days later, the Pentagon quietly scotched that name, wary of its political overtones. It's now officially known as Operation Secure Line, but privately, some soldiers are jokingly calling it "Operation Border Security"—or Operation B.S.

The U.S. military still doesn't know which port of entry the caravan is headed for. And even if it comes to Nogales, it's not clear the work of the 104th Engineer Construction Company will have been for any purpose. On Nov. 14, Defense Secretary James Mattis and Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen visited soldiers working the border mission in Donna, Texas. A soldier there asked Mattis whether they would later have to tear down the razor wire that they put up just days earlier. Mattis replied, "We'll let you know." —*With reporting by* BRIAN BENNETT *and* PHILIP ELLIOTT/WASHINGTON ◻

Helicopters fly over rapidly assembled tents used for army sleeping quarters

E9

THE 50 BEST INVENTIONS *of 2018*

Every year, TIME highlights the Best Inventions that are making the world better, smarter and even a bit more fun. To assemble our 2018 list, we solicited nominations across a variety of categories from our editors and correspondents around the world, as well as through an online application process. Then TIME evaluated each contender based on key factors, including originality, creativity, influence, ambition and effectiveness. The result: 50 groundbreaking inventions that are changing the way we live, work, play and think about what's possible.

Photographs by Andrew Myers for TIME

Illustrations by Todd Detwiler for TIME

A revolutionary robotic arm

PANDA

We're living in the middle of a robotics revolution, but the most capable machines are generally available only to wealthy corporations. The German-based robotics firm Franka Emika is changing that with the Panda, an $11,000 (roughly) easy-to-program robotic arm designed for small businesses. Able to move in seven axes and designed with a smart sense of "touch," the Panda can help conduct science experiments, build circuit boards or pretest equipment. Two Panda arms can even work together to build a third. And while the Panda isn't designed for personal use, something similar could eventually offer a helping hand at home, chopping food in the kitchen or assisting the elderly with difficult tasks. "We believe that robots will have a similar success story as personal computers," says Franka Emika's CEO and co-founder, Simon Haddadin. *—Alejandro de la Garza*

GEAR + GADGETS

A compass that points to family and friends

LYNQ

Who hasn't worried about getting separated from friends at a crowded event or losing track of a loved one on a family vacation? LynQ ($209 for two), a new location tracker, offers a fix. Using a combination of GPS technology and long-range radio frequencies, LynQs can find other LynQs up to three miles away; an onscreen dot then points each user in the right direction, like a compass. As a bonus, parents or pet owners can also set up "safe zones" to be alerted when a wandering child or animal leaves a given area. Unlike smartphones, LynQ doesn't require a cell signal or monthly subscription, and it's easier for kids to use than full GPS handsets. "We always say LynQ solves the three *W*'s," says co-founder Drew Lauter, whose startup has raised more than $1.5 million to mass-produce the device. "No more worrying, wandering or waiting around." —*A.G.*

TRANSPORTATION + TRAVEL

A HELMET WITH BUILT-IN HEADLIGHTS

LUMOS KICKSTART HELMET

Biking in the dark can be dangerous. Eu-wen Ding, as a business-school student living in Boston, nearly found out the hard way: he'd forget his lights, and cars would almost clip him. So he started thinking of a better way to ride. "All I wanted to do," says Ding, "was get from A to B without dying." Eventually, that goal led Ding to create the Lumos Kickstart Helmet ($180), whose LED lights not only increase a cyclist's visibility but also blink to indicate if she is making a left or right turn. Riders can trigger the signal by clicking a wireless remote mounted to their handlebars or by syncing the helmet with their Apple Watch and making a traditional hand turn signal. The Lumos launched in 2017 after more than $800,000 was raised on Kickstarter; more recently it became the first light-up helmet to be sold in the Apple Store.
—*Sean Gregory*

LYNQ: KIM BUBELLO FOR TIME

A lid that fits most pots

MADE IN UNIVERSAL LID

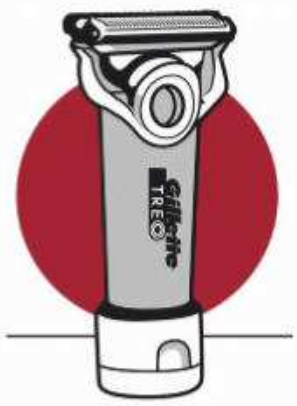
For years, inventors have tried to perfect the universal lid—that one-pot covering that could prevent all kinds of frantic cabinet searching. But most options are imperfect, dipping into pans and reducing their capacity or allowing heat loss (longer cooking times) and water runoff (messy dripping on stove tops). A new design from cookware brand Made In could be the answer. Its Universal Lid ($49), made of silicon-coated stainless steel, has three different-size bottom lips, allowing it to fit a variety of pots and pans without the issues that have plagued its predecessors. Although the product "looks very simple," says Made In co-founder Chip Malt, "a lot of thought and consideration went into getting it right." Consumers appear to agree: the first batch sold out in less than two days. —*A.G.*

ACCESSIBILITY

A razor built for assisted shaving

GILLETTE TREO

Most razors are meant to help people shave themselves. So for elderly or disabled individuals who rely on a caregiver, it can be difficult, if not downright painful, when someone else takes over, since the handles and blades aren't designed for that. Gillette Treo is the first razor built for assisted shaving, especially ideal for men's faces. Its features include a flexible blade (designed to prevent clogging) and a short, paintbrush-like handle filled with clear shave gel (a substitute for shaving cream, which can get messy). "The act of shaving is more than just removing hair from your face," says Sushant Trivedi, a manager at Gillette. "It's about dignity." The device recently entered its final phase of testing; it's expected to become commercially available in the near future. *—Samantha Cooney*



TOYS, GAMES + ENTERTAINMENT

A TV THAT BLENDS INTO THE WALL

SAMSUNG 2018 QLED TV

Today's top-of-the-line televisions deliver stunning visual quality when watching shows and movies or playing games. But when they're turned off, they're just lifeless black boxes. Not so with Samsung's newest lineup of 4K QLED models (starting at $1,099), which feature an "Ambient Mode" that displays works of art, weather reports or personal photos. You can even set them up to mimic the wall on which the TV is hanging, allowing it to seamlessly blend in to your room when not in use. Other design tweaks, such as moving all necessary connectors to a separate box, means owners need not worry about a cluster of wires uglifying an otherwise elegant piece of technology. *—Patrick Lucas Austin*

SPORTS + FITNESS

A smarter sports bra

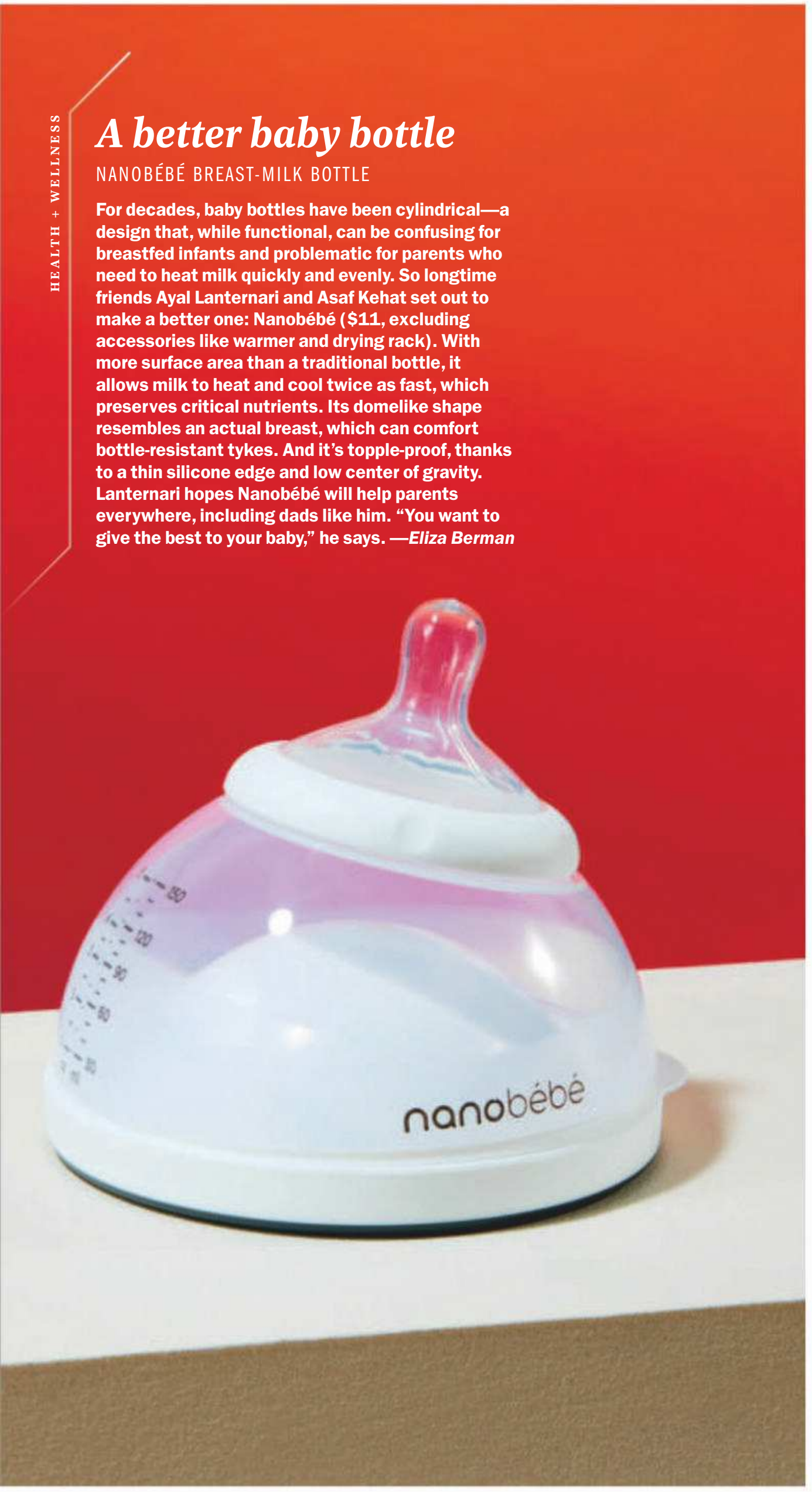
REEBOK PUREMOVE

Sports bras are hard to get right, often trading substance for style or skimping on support. So Reebok designer Danielle Witek, who had experienced this struggle herself, decided to create a better one. The result: Reebok's PureMove ($60), which uses motion-sensing technology to adapt to a woman's movements in real time. When vigorous motion strains the bra's knit fabric, a gel-like thickening fluid activates and causes the garment to constrict and offer extra support. During periods of light activity or rest, the fabric stretches back out for a comfortable, breathable fit. Now Reebok says the bra, which launched in August and quickly began resonating with consumers, is the brand's most successful online apparel launch of all time. As for Witek? "I've gotten rid of all those old bras," she says. *—Jamie Ducharme*

A better baby bottle

NANOBÉBÉ BREAST-MILK BOTTLE

For decades, baby bottles have been cylindrical—a design that, while functional, can be confusing for breastfed infants and problematic for parents who need to heat milk quickly and evenly. So longtime friends Ayal Lanternari and Asaf Kehat set out to make a better one: Nanobébé ($11, excluding accessories like warmer and drying rack). With more surface area than a traditional bottle, it allows milk to heat and cool twice as fast, which preserves critical nutrients. Its domelike shape resembles an actual breast, which can comfort bottle-resistant tykes. And it's topple-proof, thanks to a thin silicone edge and low center of gravity. Lanternari hopes Nanobébé will help parents everywhere, including dads like him. "You want to give the best to your baby," he says. —*Eliza Berman*



A new way to protect workers

FUSE RISK MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

A few months ago, a worker at a grocery distribution facility in upstate New York strapped a sensor under his chest. As he lugged heavy packs around the warehouse, the device tracked how he moved. Eventually, it dubbed him at risk of serious injury—in large part because of how much stress he was putting on his spine. So the worker met with his manager, and together they came up with a solution: the worker was given a hook to help with his lugging so he wouldn't have to bend over as much.

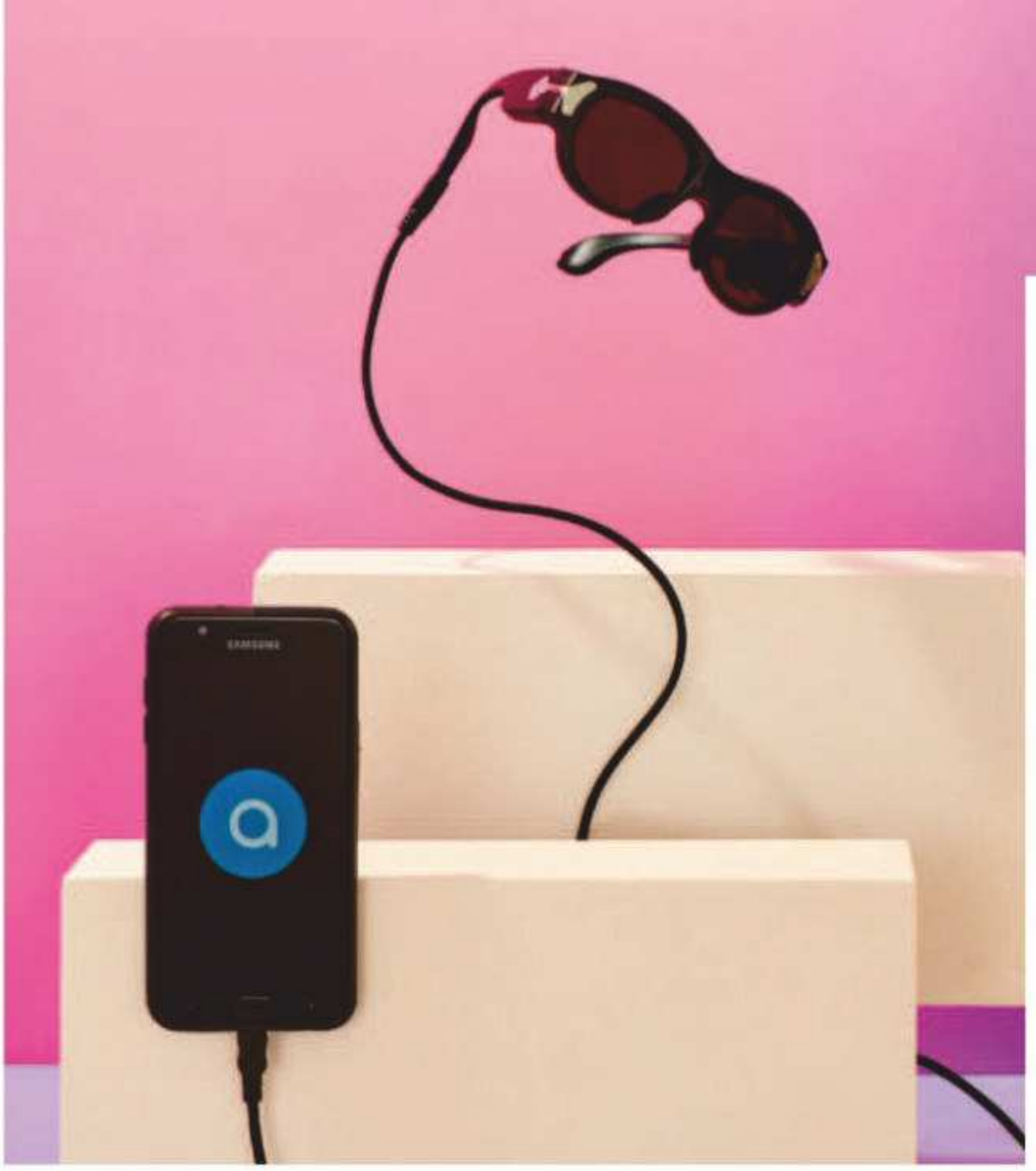
This is the promise of StrongArm Tech's Fuse Risk Management Platform, which helps employers protect vulnerable workers—and, by extension, their own bottom lines. (The most serious on-the-job injuries and accidents cost U.S. companies some $59.9 billion per year.) Since debuting in April, Fuse has been used by more than 10,000 workers, including those from 10 *Fortune* 100 companies. "Just like Nike and Under Armour break out the latest and greatest to improve the performance of their athletes," says Jack McCormack, manager of clients for StrongArm Tech, "we're doing the same for the folks who are the backbone of our economy." —*S.G.*

SPORTS BRA: COURTESY REEBOK; TV: COURTESY SAMSUNG

Bracelets that help kick bad habits

HABITAWARE KEEN

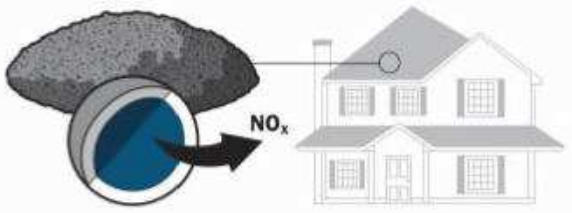
Aneela Idnani hid her stress-induced hair pulling for 20 years. "I thought I was weird. I thought I was alone," Idnani says. "I didn't want people to think lesser of me." That feeling was exacerbated once she and her husband started looking for ways to control her habit and couldn't find any user-friendly options. So she founded a company, HabitAware, to create one. Its flagship product: Keen, a sleek, smart $149 bracelet that users program to pick up on repetitive motions, such as hair pulling, skin picking or nail biting. Keen vibrates when it catches users in the act. That kind of awareness-building, experts say, is key to kicking compulsions for good. Keen is now on track to pass $1 million in sales this year, and in June, HabitAware secured a $300,000 grant from the National Institutes of Mental Health to further its research into breaking bad habits. —*J.D.*



On-demand eyes for the blind

AIRA

For people who are blind, everyday tasks such as sorting through the mail or doing a load of laundry present a challenge. But what if they could "borrow" the eyes of someone who could see? That's the thinking behind Aira, a new subscription service (starting at $99 per month for its standard plan) that enables its thousands of users to stream live video of their surroundings to an on-demand agent, using either a smartphone or Aira's proprietary glasses. The agents, who are available 24/7, can then answer questions, describe objects or guide users through a location. Greg Stilson, Aira's director of product management (who himself is blind), used the service to navigate airports for an entire year before agreeing to join the company. "It was the most emotionally freeing year I've had in my entire life," he says. *—S.C.*



SUSTAINABILITY + SOCIAL GOOD

Roofing that fights smog pollution

3M™ SMOG-REDUCING GRANULES

Smog is a silent killer across the globe. The pollutant, which comes largely from automotive emissions and industrial facilities, leads to thousands of premature deaths worldwide from illnesses like respiratory disease. Minnesota-based manufacturer 3M has created a material for roofing shingles that, when exposed to the sun's UV rays, breaks down smog particles so they can be washed away by rainfall, thereby reducing pollution. One 3M customer, Malarkey Roofing (a top U.S. manufacturer of roofing shingles), said earlier this year it would incorporate the particles in all of its shingles. 3M says Malarkey's products have already reduced an amount of smog equivalent to 100,000 trees. "We hope next year it's 200,000 and the year after that 400,000," says Josh Orman, strategy and marketing manager at 3M. *—Justin Worland*

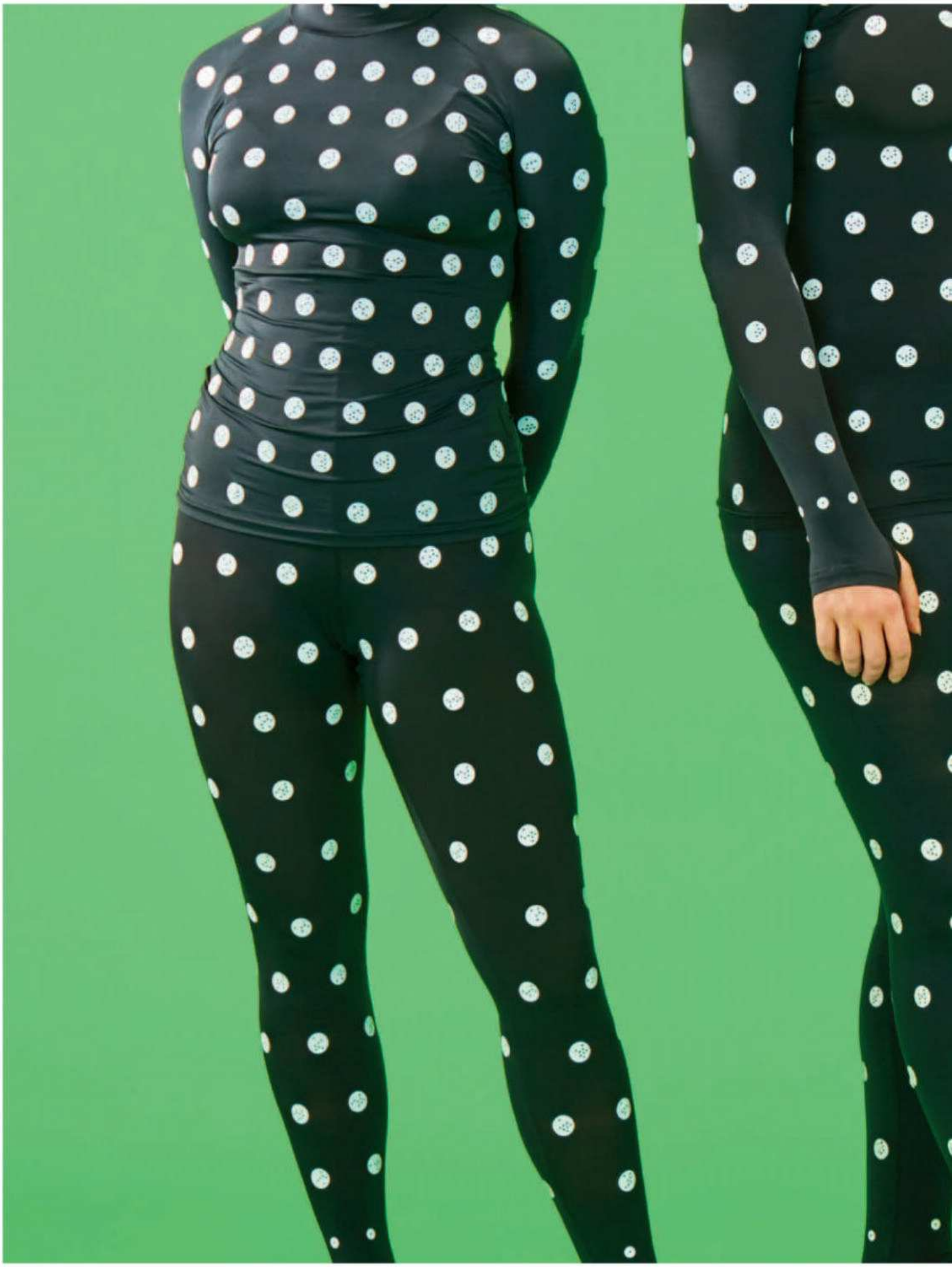
ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

A SIMPLER SOFA

BURROW SOFA

Like many business-school students, Stephen Kuhl and Kabeer Chopra bonded over a common anguish—in their case, buying a couch. They found cheap models that could ship right away but were flimsy and required tedious assembly. They found luxe models that were well made but couldn't be delivered without costly fees and lengthy waits. Eventually they founded a company, Burrow, to create a middle ground. Its modular three-seat couch—the result of more than two dozen rounds of design—starts at $1,195 and ships straight to consumers in easy-to-assemble pieces; it's also customizable, both in color and configuration. When Kuhl and Chopra first pitched the idea to manufacturers in 2016, "everyone kind of laughed at us," Kuhl says. Now they've sold more than 10,000 sofas and are capable of shipping within the U.S. in as little as one week. *—Katy Steinmetz*

SOFA: COURTESY BURROW



Clothes for every body

ZOZOSUIT

In the future, clothes will adapt to people—not the other way around. At least, that's the promise of ZOZOSUIT, the flagship product from ZOZO, a Japanese retailer. The stretchy black bodysuits are covered in white dots, which enables consumers to make a "3-D scan" of their bodies in the comfort of their own home, via a companion mobile app. Users can then order custom-fit clothes—such as $58 jeans and $22 T-shirts—based on a set of super-specific measurements. "This is a new era," says ZOZO founder and CEO Yusaku Maezawa, whose larger goal is to do away with fashion's long-held idea of standardized sizing, which often excludes many body types. Since its launch in Japan in April, ZOZO has shipped over 1 million ZOZOSUITs; now the brand is looking to expand its customization technology into footwear. —*Cady Lang*

ACCESSIBILITY

Making gaming more inclusive

XBOX ADAPTIVE CONTROLLER

For people with limited hand and arm mobility, it can be tough to play video games, which are generally controlled using small buttons and joysticks. And while some gamers and small companies have engineered hacks, major gaming companies have largely remained on the sidelines—until now. Inspired by an internal hackathon and informed by work with groups like the Cerebral Palsy Foundation, Microsoft developed the Xbox Adaptive Controller ($100), an oversize version of its classic rig designed to empower as many gamers as possible. Its main buttons, for example, are roughly 4 in. in diameter—large enough to be pressed with an elbow or chin, if necessary. It also features ports to accommodate additional aids, like a foot pedal. Xbox designer Chris Kujawski urges others to follow suit: "We hope [our controller] becomes a catalyst for inclusiveness in the gaming industry." *—S.C.*

SPORTS + FITNESS

A MIRROR THAT GUIDES YOUR FITNESS REGIME

MIRROR

For years, fitness companies have been promising the ultimate at-home gym experience, giving rise to everything from low-tech treadmills to super-sleek Peloton bikes. Now there's Mirror ($1,495), a full-length display that is both a literal mirror and an interactive fitness coach, allowing users to stream live workouts, such as boot camp and barre, and get real-time feedback from trainers. (Competitor Tonal offers a similar product but with bulkier equipment that marries a mirror with gym weight machines.) CEO Brynn Putnam, a former ballerina who also founded the New York City boutique fitness chain Refine Method, says she hopes Mirror will become a full-on gym replacement, aided by $38 million in investor backing. "If I could put [Refine] out of business, I'd be really happy," she laughs. *—J.D.*

GEAR + GADGETS

Giving workers a virtual hand

BEBOP SENSORS FORTE WIRELESS GLOVE

The ability to have digital "hands" in virtual reality could be a game changer for creative professionals, allowing them to bring their designs to life in a three-dimensional VR space. California-based BeBop Sensors is making that possible with its Forte wireless gloves, which allow users to grab and manipulate digital objects as if they actually existed in real life. Thanks to flexible sensors embedded in their fabric design, the Forte gloves can track more of a wearer's hands than other virtual-reality gloves (most of which are designed for simpler uses in video games). That translates into far better accuracy when replicating a wearer's movements. Architects, for instance, are already using the Forte gloves to assemble VR models of their buildings that make it easier to see how they will look when constructed in real life. *—P.L.A.*

A super-sticky toolbox

GRYPMAT

While working as an F-16 weapons mechanic in the Air Force, Tom Burden often found his tools sliding off the aircraft—a result of the fact no existing toolbox could stick to a curved surface without scratching it. So he prototyped his own, starting with the kind of bendable, nonslip mat that keeps phones from sliding off car dashboards and tweaking the material until it could withstand the kind of heat and chemicals he encountered on the job. His creation, the Grypmat ($40), got a major boost in 2017, when investors agreed to back it on the reality show *Shark Tank*. Since then, Burden has found customers across all kinds of professions, from surgeons to jewelry makers; he's now on track to have sold 200,000 Grypmats by year's end. And while he's grateful for his success, he's also surprised nobody beat him to the punch. "It's not a genius idea," he says. "It's a clever one." —*K.S.*

Shoes that could help save the world

ALLBIRDS SWEETFOAM

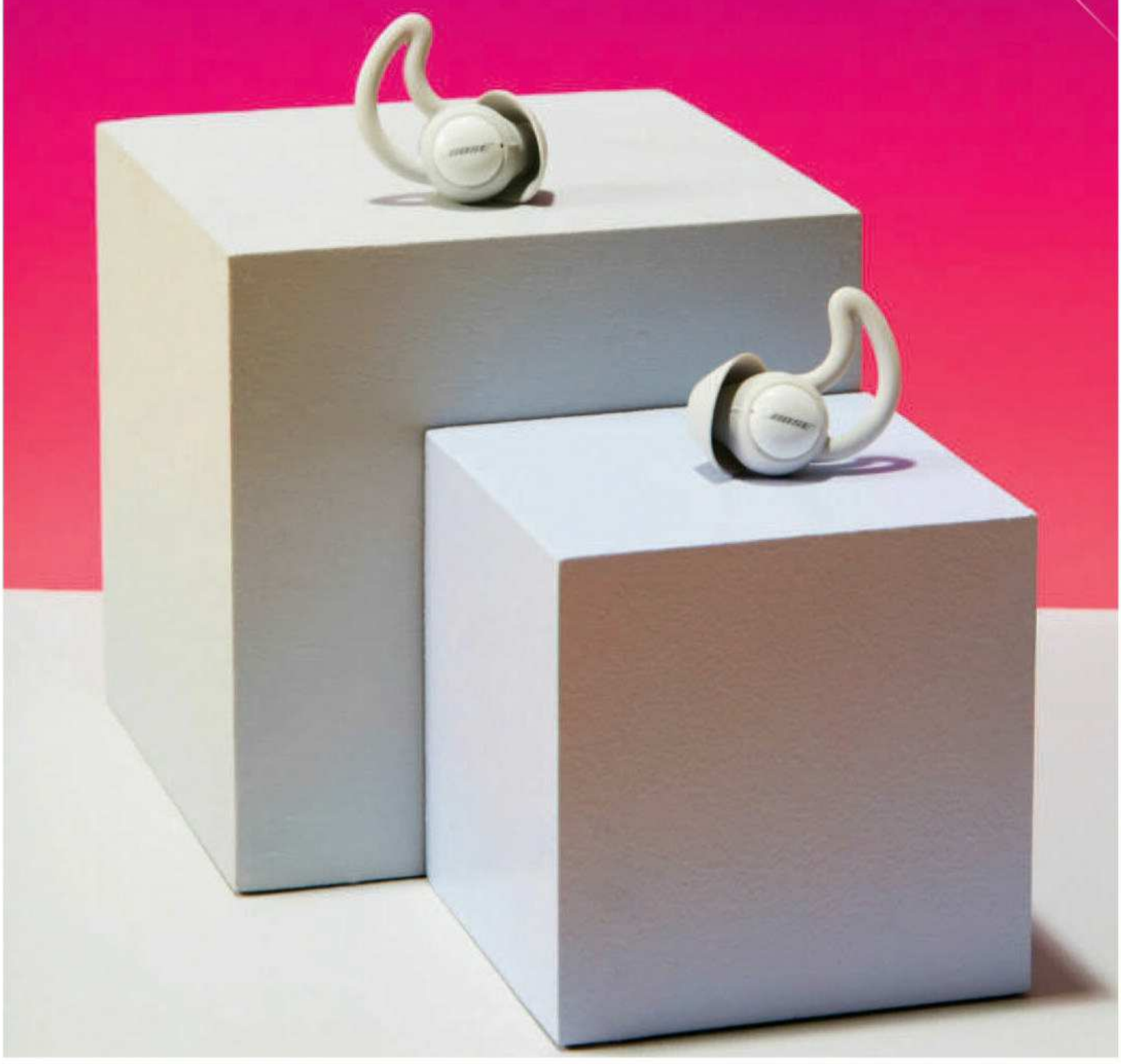
The shoe industry has a big carbon footprint, thanks in part to the fact that many shoe parts—including plastic soles, logos and shoelace tips—are made from petroleum. Retail startup Allbirds is testing an eco-friendly alternative: SweetFoam, a new material made from parts of sugarcane that would otherwise be discarded (thereby releasing climate change–causing carbon dioxide into the air). Allbirds launched SweetFoam earlier this year in a line of flip-flops; it plans to start using the material across its entire product line soon—including its popular wool sneakers, which have sold more than 1 million pairs since their 2016 debut. And in an effort to encourage its competitors to follow suit, the San Francisco–based company has made the technical know-how behind SweetFoam "available to anyone who wants it, without question," says co-founder Joey Zwillinger. —*J.W.*

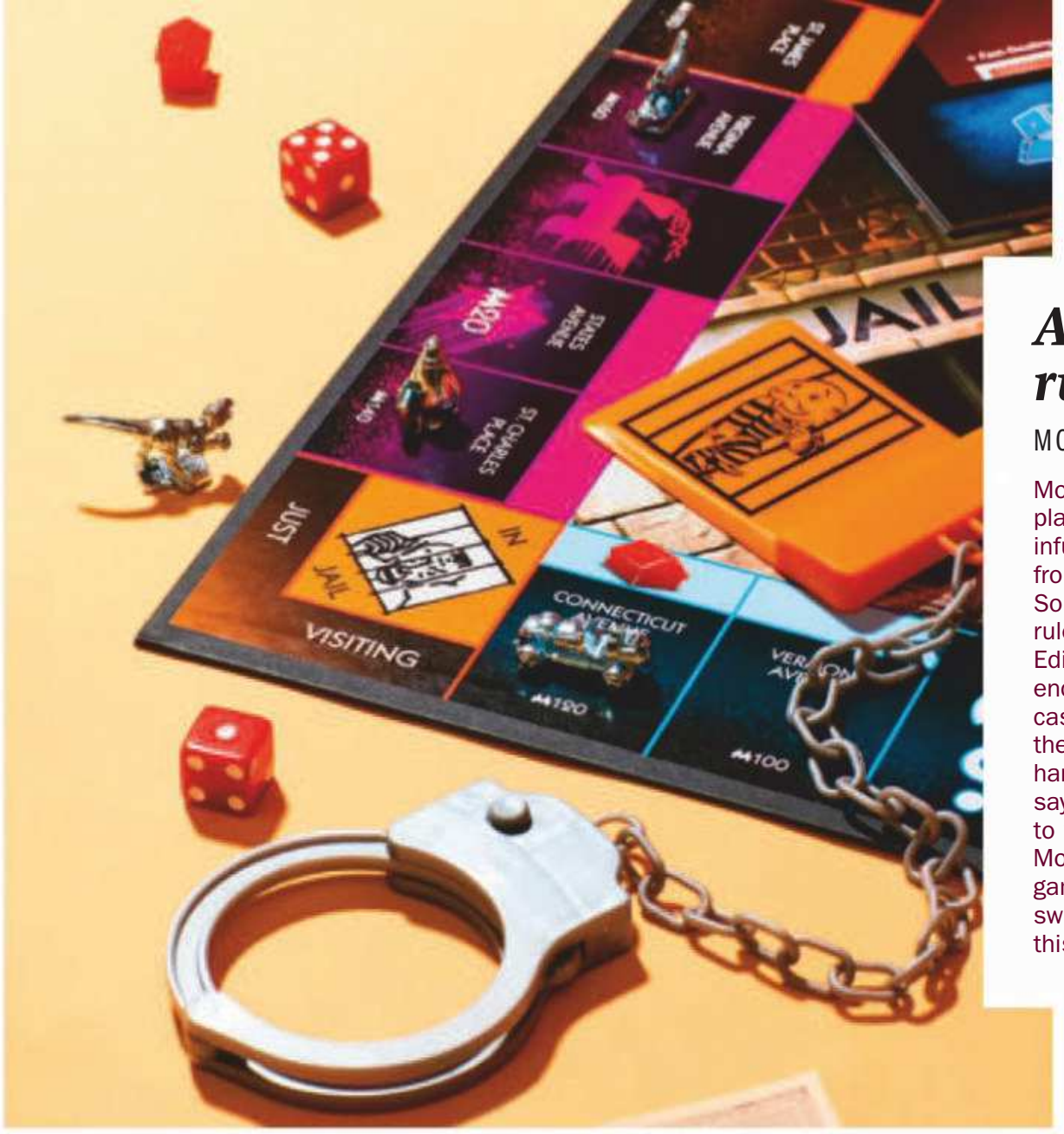
XBOX, ALLBIRDS: KIM BUBELLO FOR TIME; MIRROR: COURTESY MIRROR

Earbuds that help improve your slumber

BOSE SLEEPBUDS

From street traffic to snoring partners, ambient sounds can make it tough to fall asleep. And while earplugs and white-noise machines do help, the audio experts at Bose have developed a higher-end solution: Sleepbuds ($250), a pair of earbuds designed specifically to enhance your slumber. Unlike more traditional wireless headphones, they are small enough (roughly 1 cm in both width and height) to fit inside the ear without jutting out and light enough (1.4 g) to feel weightless—both essential for comfort while sleeping. Their soft silicone tips ensure that they stay in place, even if wearers toss and turn. And they cannot stream podcasts or music. Instead, users choose from a preset menu of 10 soothing sounds, such as ocean waves, warm static or rustling leaves. *—P.L.A.*





A haven for rule breakers

MONOPOLY: CHEATERS EDITION

Monopoly is hard enough when everybody plays by the rules, but cheating is infuriatingly common—players steal from the bank, skip ahead and worse. So Hasbro decided to embrace the rule breakers with Monopoly: Cheaters Edition ($20), in which "cheat cards" encourage players to dupe others for cash or property. But those caught in the act face consequences, like being handcuffed to the board. The goal, says Hasbro's Jennifer Boswinkel, was to "capture the mischievous spirit of Monopoly players while keeping the core game play intact." Of course, inventive swindlers will likely find a way to cheat at this too. *—Megan McCluskey*

FOOD + DRINK

The other other white meat

BEYOND SAUSAGE

In recent years, alternative beef—a.k.a. real-seeming burger patties made from plant oils and proteins—has started popping up on menus at restaurants from Bareburger to White Castle. Now Beyond Meat, the company behind the Beyond Burger, is experimenting with a different alternative-meat product: sausage. Its new Beyond Sausage ($9 for a pack of four) looks and tastes surprisingly close to the real thing. It's also leaner, with 43% less total fat and 38% less saturated fat, and much more sustainable than actual meat. (By one estimate, the global livestock industry is responsible for nearly 20% of human-caused greenhouse gases.) Earlier this year, the company opened a second plant to meet demand. *—A.G.*

SAUSAGE: COURTESY BEYOND SAUSAGE; MODEL 3: COURTESY HEATWORKS

SUSTAINABILITY + SOCIAL GOOD

A MORE EFFICIENT WATER HEATER

MODEL 3 SMART WATER HEATER

Most water heaters consume massive amounts of power, ratcheting up families' energy bills in the process. The designers at Heatworks are looking to fix that with the MODEL 3 Smart Water Heater. Unlike other heaters, which heat water in a tank using metal components, the MODEL 3 sends electrical current through the water, heating it up quickly and only when residents actually need it. Using a companion app, owners can also track their water usage, set a maximum temperature and even limit shower times, further helping to curtail costs. At $799, the MODEL 3 is more expensive than many other water heaters, but the energy savings may well add up fast: Heatworks estimates that the device will save the average family of four $240 a year. *—J.W.*

TOYS, GAMES + ENTERTAINMENT

Helping gamers create their own fun

NINTENDO LABO

Usually with video games, all the fun happens on the players' screens. Not so with Nintendo Labo ($60 and up), a set of kits allowing DIY-inclined gamers to construct their own cardboard controllers for the company's grab-and-go Switch console. Called Toy-Cons, the Labo controllers range from a 13-key piano to a robot suit to a steering wheel. Once built and joined with a standard Switch controller, Toy-Cons can be used for a variety of minigames, like fishing or racing. Nintendo producer Kouichi Kawamoto says the aim was to "combine physical and digital game play." While build-and-play toys that connect to electronics aren't new, Labo is unique in the video-gaming world, where controllers are typically store-bought and rarely fun in their own right. The conceit has clearly struck a chord with consumers: Nintendo has sold more than 1.39 million Labo kits since its April 2018 launch. *—M.M.*

SPORTS + FITNESS

A JACKET THAT GLOWS IN THE DARK

VOLLEBAK SOLAR CHARGED JACKET

Nighttime adrenaline junkies can now glow in the dark, thanks to the Solar Charged Jacket ($350) from Vollebak, a U.K.-based sports-gear startup. The jacket's phosphorescent membrane absorbs light during the day and releases what Vollebak founder Steve Tidball calls "kryptonite green energy" after sunset. Part of the jacket's appeal, of course, is novelty: because it can absorb light from almost any source, wearers can, for example, trace patterns on its surface using an iPhone flashlight. But it's also helpful from a safety standpoint, allowing runners and hikers to be visible after dark. And should something bad happen in a remote area, Tidball adds, "it's nice to know that rescuers can spot you." *—S.G.*

NINTENDO; KIM BUBELLO FOR TIME

Keeping produce fresh longer

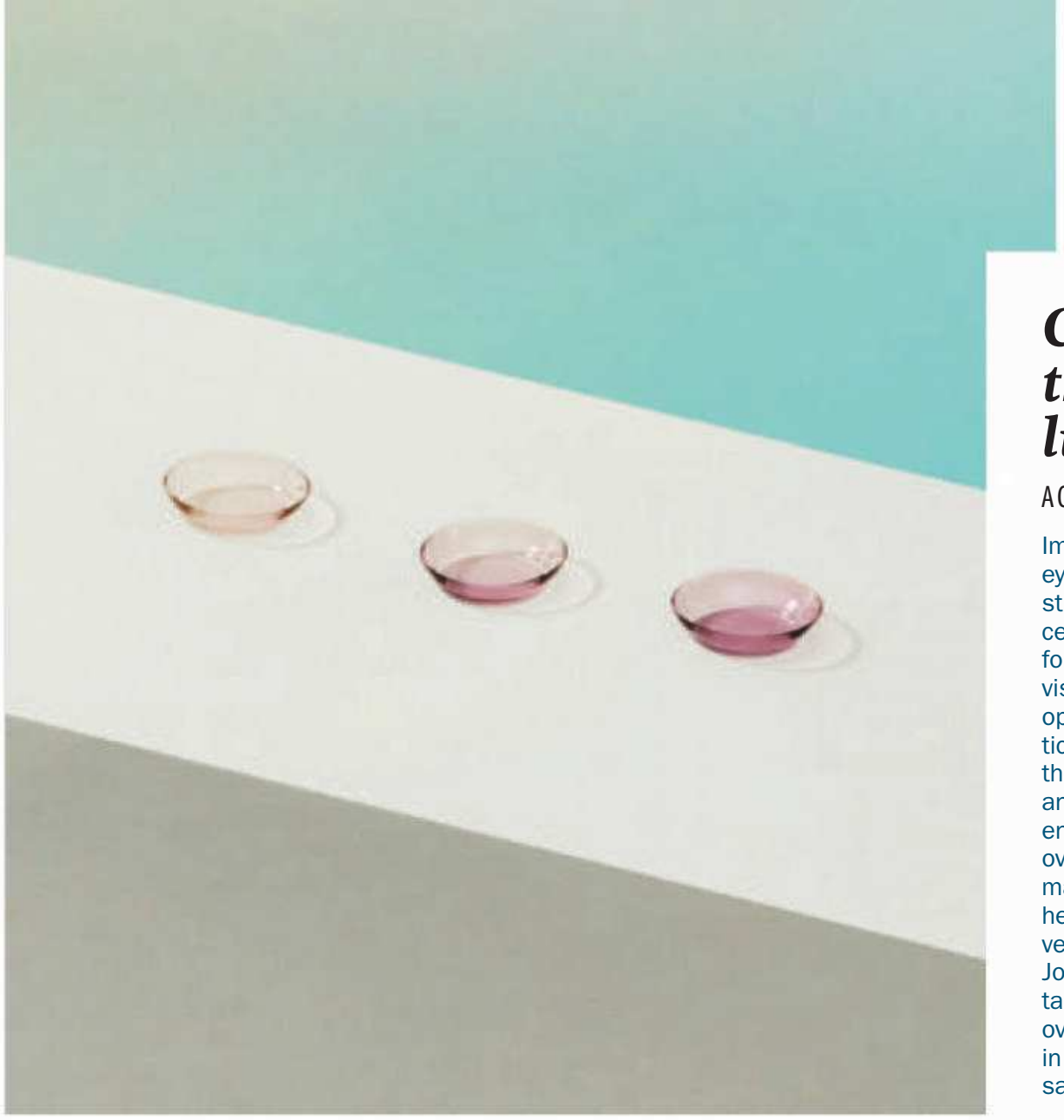
RUBBERMAID FRESHWORKS

American households waste nearly 200 lb. of fruits and vegetables a year because of spoilage, costing upwards of $100 a year in grocery bills. Housewares company Rubbermaid has a potential solution in its FreshWorks countertop series ($25 for a 2 gal. container). As produce ripens, it consumes oxygen and gives off water and carbon dioxide. Rubbermaid's containers regulate the flow of all three into and out of the container. Meanwhile, its elevated design reduces moisture buildup underneath food. The result? Tomatoes, avocados, grapes and more that can stay fresh for days longer than they would left on a countertop. —*A.G.*

A suitcase you don't need to unpack

THE CARRY-ON CLOSET

Unpacking and repacking is a hassle, especially if you're traveling for business. But what if you could bring a closet with you? That's the idea behind the Carry-on Closet from Solgaard Design ($199). Outside, it looks like a normal roll-aboard. But inside is a flexible set of shelves that keep clothes organized—and compressed—during travel and, once travelers reach their destination, can be taken out to hang. (The system can also be removed entirely.) "When you're really pressed for time, any way to keep your stuff tidy when you're on the go is super helpful," says Adrian Solgaard, founder and CEO of Solgaard Design, who adds that he's selling the Carry-on Closet as fast as he can order new units. —*Alex Fitzpatrick*



Contact lenses that adjust to light

ACUVUE OASYS WITH TRANSITIONS

Imagine never having to shield your eyes from blinding sunlight, or feel the strain of eight-plus hours under fluorescent bulbs. That's the allure of Acuvue's forthcoming line of light-sensitive, vision-correcting contact lenses (developed in partnership with Transitions Optical). Each contains a filter that senses the amount of light entering your eye and automatically darkens or lightens to maximize comfort. "We had to overcome a huge technology hurdle to make this happen," says David Turner, head of contact-lens research and development at Acuvue's parent company, Johnson & Johnson Vision. The contacts, which have been in the works for over a decade, received FDA clearance in April. Turner expects them to go on sale early next year. *—J.D.*

HEALTH + WELLNESS

A treatment for migraines

AIMOVIG

Millions of Americans suffer debilitating migraines, affecting their performance at work or school and contributing to anxiety and other mental-health issues. But few treatment options exist. Pharmaceutical firm Amgen is seeking to change that with Aimovig, which in May became the first Food and Drug Administration–approved drug designed to prevent migraines. Administered by monthly injection, the drug works by blocking a protein receptor in the brain, preventing a peptide that may trigger migraines from attaching to its target. During trials, it halved the number of recipients' migraine days. Cen Xu, Amgen's scientific director for neuroscience, says she has been overwhelmed by positive feedback from the more than 52,000 people using Aimovig so far. "Seeing the handwritten letters, I get very emotional," she says. Aimovig costs $575 per dose before insurance, but Amgen helps some patients, whose private health plans don't cover the drug, get it at no cost for up to a year. *—J.D.*

SUSTAINABILITY + SOCIAL GOOD

LIFESAVING DELIVERY DRONES

SECOND-GENERATION ZIPLINE

In 2016, Zipline made history by launching the first commercial drone delivery service in the East African nation of Rwanda, expediting the delivery of blood and vital medical supplies to some of the world's most remote communities. This year, the California-based startup unveiled a new iteration of its fixed-wing craft that can carry up to 3.85 lb. at 80 m.p.h. for up to 100 miles per round-trip, making it the fastest—and most efficient—commercial delivery drone in the world. Zipline also streamlined its launch and recovery process, enabling the second-generation Zips to make 500 deliveries per day from their launching center, up from 50. And while Zipline will continue to serve rural communities in Africa, which now have even quicker, easier access to lifesaving supplies, the startup has other ambitions as well. Zipline recently started testing emergency medical-supply delivery in the U.S. and will start regular service in North Carolina early next year. *—Aryn Baker*

DRONE: COURTESY ZIPLINE

TRANSPORTATION + TRAVEL

An electric skateboard that's easier to carry around

BOOSTED MINI

Skateboards are best known for recreation, but electric options are changing the narrative: instead of kickflips and ollies, these battery-and-motor boards enable users to cover short distances in short order. And Boosted's latest model is making them more accessible than ever. At 15 lb. and 29.5 in., the Mini ($750) is shorter and lighter than its competitors, making it easier to carry inside when riders arrive at their destination. And it can still maintain speeds of up to 20 m.p.h. To be sure, electric-skateboard travel is not for everyone: traffic can pose a danger, and high-capacity batteries like the kind Boosted uses have had overheating issues in the past. Still, Boosted CEO Jeff Russakow maintains that the Mini is an important step toward a less car-dependent future: it's "a Tesla you can throw in your backpack." —*A.F.*

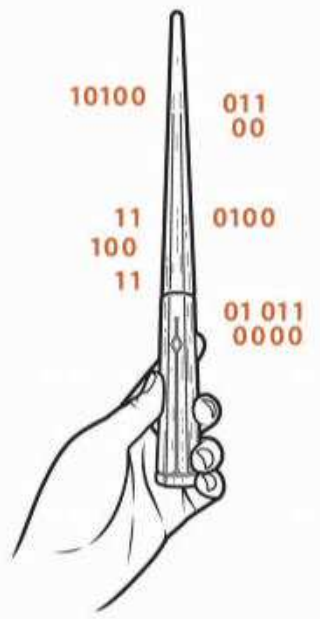
TOYS, GAMES + ENTERTAINMENT

A wizard's wand that teaches kids to code

HARRY POTTER KANO CODING KIT

The *Harry Potter* universe is already being used to get children excited about reading. Now Kano, makers of the kid-friendly Kano Computer Kit, is betting it can do the same for computer programming. Its Harry Potter Coding Kit ($100) challenges users to complete quests in a virtual wizarding world by programming "spells." Once users enter a series of commands, they can make it so waving a physical wand up, for example, changes the color of a virtual potion, or moving it sideways causes an object to levitate—the same "if this, then that" logic that underpins traditional computer programming.

Kano worked with J.K. Rowling's literary agency and Warner Bros. to ensure that its platform captured the magic of the wizarding world. The idea, says Kano CEO Alex Klein, is to give users "creative challenges" that empower them to solve problems, both on computers and in life. *—M.M.*



A vacuum that empties itself

IROBOT ROOMBA I7+

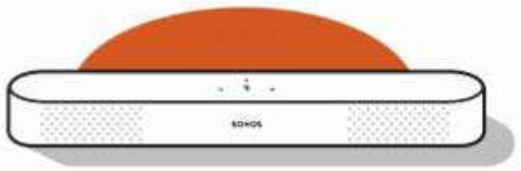
Since their emergence in the early 2000s, robotic vacuums have been helping people keep house. But even the most high-end models require users to manually clean them out after each session—a process that can be both messy and time-consuming. Not so with iRobot's new Roomba i7+ ($950), which empties itself. While the device is powering up, a separate vacuum inside its base charger sucks the dirt and dust from the Roomba's innards into a disposable bag—each of which can hold about a month's worth of gunk. The process, says iRobot CEO Colin Angle, is designed to "free customers from every aspect of vacuuming, from start to finish, for weeks at a time." And it may well help iRobot continue to beat Wall Street's earnings expectations, especially as the holiday shopping season looms. —*A.F.*

TRANSPORTATION + TRAVEL

The electric semitruck

THOR ET-ONE

The 3 million semitrucks on U.S. roads are essential to the national economy. But they're also bad for the environment, emitting millions of tons of carbon pollution. One solution: the ET-One, a formerly fuel-burning truck that California-based startup Thor has converted into a sleek electric rig. The $150,000-plus vehicle, which is still in its prototype phase, can haul up to 80,000 lb. for up to 300 miles on a single charge. (That's about as much weight as a regular semi, albeit at a fraction of the range—for now.) Thor is not alone in this space; it's going up against some industry heavyweights, including Elon Musk's Tesla. But CEO Dakota Semler says he is confident that converting old trucks into futuristic rigs, instead of building new vehicles from scratch, can help it beat the competition to market. "We want to get our electric trucks out in the world to make a difference now, not 10 years down the road," he says. *—A.F.*



TOYS, GAMES + ENTERTAINMENT

A speaker that could replace your TV remote

SONOS BEAM

The struggle of home-theater geeks everywhere has long been the seemingly endless proliferation of remotes, as almost every new gadget comes with its own controller. The Sonos Beam soundbar ($399) aims to replace them all with a simpler solution: your voice. Instead of pushing a button to raise the volume or shut off a TV, users can simply ask their Beam—which works with a multitude of TVs, as well as smart-home platforms like Alexa and Siri—to make it happen. And like most Sonos products, the Beam also delivers superior sound quality, with full-range woofers, tweeters and a "speech enhancement" mode that helps clarify dialogue. "We wanted to bring premium sound to the room where families spend the majority of their time: the living room," says Sonos product manager Scott Fink. *—A.F.*

TOYS, GAMES + ENTERTAINMENT

TOYS THAT EVOLVE WITH YOUR BABY

LOVEVERY PLAY KITS

To a baby, a toy is more than just a toy—it's a tool that can be instrumental to early brain development, so long as it's deployed correctly. That's the thinking behind Lovevery Play Kits, which are designed to engage babies at every stage of development. The 0-to-8-week kit, for example, includes cards with high-contrast black and white images for visual stimulation; the 7-to-8-month kit includes a simple puzzle to develop motor skills and problem-solving. (Parents can buy an individual two-month play kit for $80 or subscribe for $36 per month to get recurring shipments.) "There is something magical about a toy if it's done right, because it can help clue the parent into what the baby is hungry to do," says Jessica Rolph, who co-founded Lovevery with her friend and fellow parent Roderick Morris, in consultation with a cadre of experts. Eventually, they envision a line of products targeting kids through age 6. Next up: toddlers. *—E.B.*

ET-ONE: COURTESY THOR; PLAY KITS: COURTESY LOVEVERY

A wi-fi router that knows no bounds

NETGEAR ORBI VOICE

Anyone with a wi-fi router knows the struggle of signal strength, which can vary wildly from room to room. Not so with Netgear's Orbi, a wi-fi system that uses "mesh" technology to ensure quality coverage throughout a home. Its main router beams an Internet signal to one or several satellite devices, which users place around their home; their gadgets then latch on to whichever signal is strongest in any given spot, ensuring blazing-fast speeds. Orbi's latest satellite device, Orbi Voice ($430, including the wi-fi router), also doubles as an Alexa-enabled smart speaker, enabling users to play music and control other compatible smart-home devices by voice command. —*A.F.*

SUSTAINABILITY + SOCIAL GOOD

A more private pregnancy test

LIA

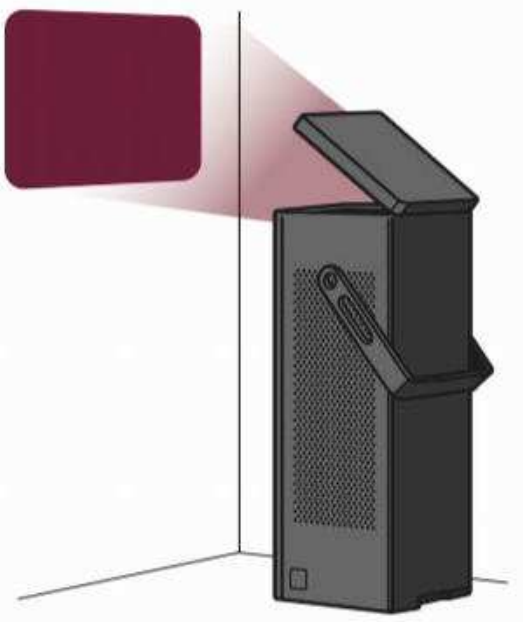
Plastic pregnancy tests create 2 million lb. of waste each year—a figure that first motivated Bethany Edwards to develop Lia, a paper-based, biodegradable alternative. But as she started working, she realized she could address another issue too. "Who hasn't hidden a [plastic] pregnancy test in the trash before?" she says. "There is a privacy need that's not being met." Because Lia is paper-based, it's also flushable, which makes it more discreet. The test is set to go on sale by early 2019 and will cost about as much as a traditional version. Already, it has a 28,000-person waiting list. —*J.D.*

TOYS, GAMES + ENTERTAINMENT

THE ULTIMATE AT-HOME MOVIE PROJECTOR

LG CINEBEAM LASER 4K PROJECTOR

As movie prices skyrocket, some cinephiles are turning to elaborate setups to replicate the theater experience at home. There are few better ways to do so than the LG CineBeam Laser 4K Projector, a $2,999 projector that uses lasers to beam a dazzling 150-in. 4K image up onto a wall or screen. "We sought to achieve two at-times divergent goals when designing the projector: delivering superior image quality in a portable, functional design," says Yong Kim, head of projector development at LG Electronics. The CineBeam can stream content from most major streaming services from Netflix to Hulu, and also works with video-game consoles. At only about 15 lb. and equipped with a handle, it's easy to carry around too. But it doesn't make the popcorn. —*A.F.*



PREGNANCY TEST: COURTESY LIA

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FASHION + BEAUTY

DIAMONDS FORGED IN PLASMA

DIAMOND FOUNDRY SUSTAINABLE DIAMONDS

For decades, we have been promised lab-grown diamonds that are brilliant, affordable and free from the environmental pitfalls of diamond mining. But their makers have struggled to deliver quality stones at scale. The Diamond Foundry has an edge: its new hydro-powered plasma reactor in Wenatchee, Wash., constructs diamonds using a fraction of the energy of other methods, including mining. As a result, the facility can churn up to 1 million carats of diamond every year, enough for nearly 500,000 average-size engagement rings. That speed, the company says, makes it possible for lab-grown diamonds to be cost-effectively produced at mining scale for the first time. Diamond Foundry stones (which range from a few hundred dollars to more than $30,000) are gem-quality, and the company recently partnered with Apple's Jony Ive to create an all-diamond ring to raise money for charity. —*J.W.*

GEAR + GADGETS

A sleep coach for babies

NANIT PLUS BABY MONITOR

Even the most watchful parent can't watch their baby *all* the time. But it's hard to help babies get the sleep that's so critical to their development—and parents' sanity—without knowing how they sleep. Enter Nanit Plus ($279, plus $100 for a stand and one year of personalized tips), which is one part baby monitor, enabling parents to watch a live feed of their child via an app, and one part sleep coach: it tracks key factors about a baby's slumber—including her surrounding conditions, such as humidity levels—to offer parents data-backed tips on how to improve it. If a baby stays awake too long in her crib, for example, Nanit might suggest adjusting the temperature or darkening the room. And while that level of surveillance may seem creepy to some, co-founder Assaf Glazer likens his device to a trusted babysitter: "I sometimes imagine my mother sitting above the crib, 24/7—she gives me advice so I can make better decisions tomorrow." Eventually, he hopes to use Nanit for early detection of conditions like autism and sleep apnea. —*E.B.*

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A simpler way to apply makeup

YUBI BUFF AND BLEND SET

There is no perfect way to apply face makeup. Using brushes allows for precision and consistency, but it's a hassle to carry so many around; using fingers is simple but can be messy and unhygienic. That's why Adiya Dixon Wiggins created the Yubi Buff and Blend set ($39), featuring a new ergonomic makeup tool that slides onto users' fingertips and offers them the ability to switch between two "heads": a buff brush and a soft blending sponge. The goal, says Wiggins, a former international lawyer and mom of two, is to make it simpler to apply makeup, especially when you're on the go. "I wanted something that was easier" than traditional brushes, she explains. Turns out she wasn't the only one: on the heels of a strong launch earlier this year, the device will debut on the Home Shopping Network in January 2019. —*C.L.*

ACCESSIBILITY

A WHEELCHAIR THAT EMPOWERS ITS USERS

WHILL MODEL CI

Over 3 million Americans rely on wheelchairs to get around. And yet, there has been little innovation in that field—most wheelchairs are bulky vessels that struggle to traverse many terrains. Enter the Model Ci ($3,999), a new electric model. Thanks to its specially engineered front "omni-wheels," it can ride up to 10 miles indoors or outdoors, climb obstacles up to two inches in height and easily navigate cramped quarters; it can also be disassembled in minutes, enabling easy transport. Parent company Whill says the Model Ci, which also comes in gold and millennial pink (among other colors), has sold almost 10,000 units since its January debut. —*S.C.*

YUBI: KIM BUBELLO FOR TIME

A companion for kids with cancer

MY SPECIAL AFLAC DUCK

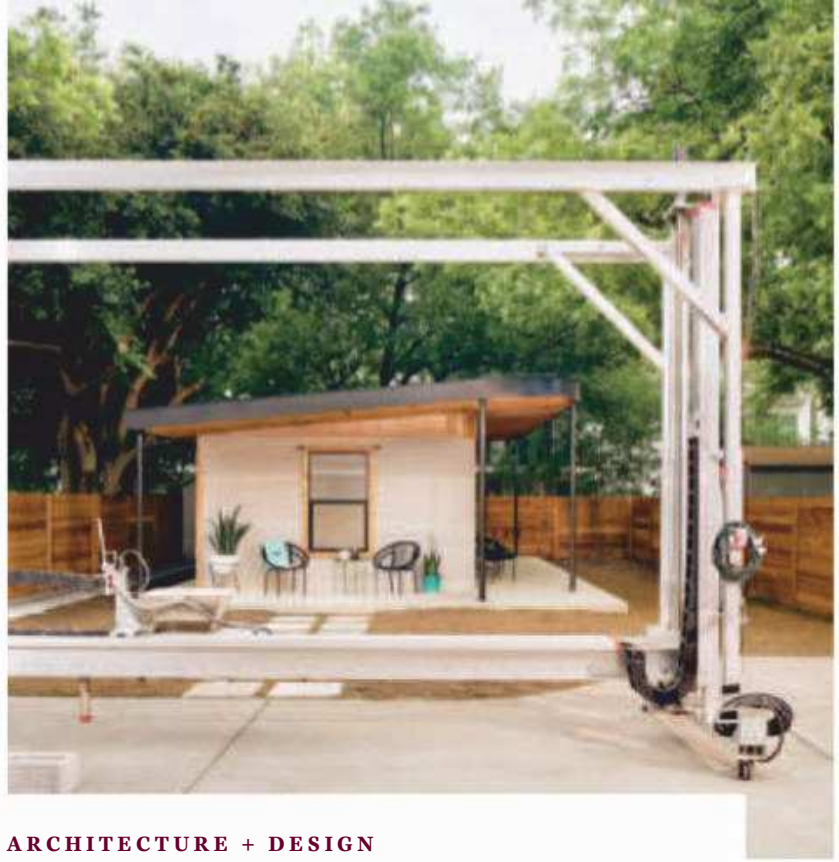
Many kids diagnosed with cancer say the hardest part is feeling as if they've lost control over their lives. This animatronic duck, which insurance giant Aflac distributes free to pediatric patients, aims to restore it. Among its many features: a companion IV set that allows kids to "treat" the duck with chemotherapy, so they can see how the process works, and "emoji cards" that, when tapped against the duck's chest, prompt it to act out feelings the child is too scared or confused to express to doctors. This experience is "not just about getting better medically," says Aaron Horowitz, a designer at health care tech firm Sproutel, which Aflac tapped to spearhead the project after Sproutel launched a similar toy (Jerry the Bear) for kids with diabetes. "It's about being happy." —*J.D.*

HEALTH + WELLNESS

Smarter training for surgeons

FUNDAMENTAL SURGERY

Everyone wants their surgeon to be perfectly prepared, but there are few affordable ways for medical residents to practice without putting patients at risk. Virtual-reality simulators help, but they have at least one major limitation. "You can't touch the environment in a meaningful way," says Richard Vincent, CEO of FundamentalVR, whose VR surgical simulator fixes that by incorporating haptic feedback (similar to a smartphone's vibration) so doctors can "feel" their actions as if they were really performing surgery. Crucially, the system uses hardware-agnostic technology and costs as little as $8,000—far less than traditional training systems—which makes it more accessible to surgeons around the world. Some 50 hospitals are already using it, including big names like the Mayo Clinic. —J.D.



ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN

3-D PRINTING AN END TO HOMELESSNESS

ICON VULCAN 3-D PRINTER

Earlier this year, Texas startup ICON turned heads after building a 350-sq.-ft. dwelling in 48 hours from start to finish. Its not-so-secret weapon: the Vulcan 3-D printer, a groundbreaking machine that erects the basic structure of a home, layer by layer, from concrete—at a fraction of the material and labor costs of traditional methods. ICON, which spent nine months developing Vulcan, has raised $9 million to improve its functionality, aiming to print a 2,000-sq.-ft. house in just 24 hours. ICON is also working with New Story, a housing nonprofit focused on Latin America and the Caribbean, to bring Vulcan to regions in need of cheap, durable housing solutions. But eventually CEO Jason Ballard envisions a future in which anyone can build a custom abode. "This isn't science fiction," he says. —*Eli Meixler*

HEALTH + WELLNESS

Blankets that ease anxiety

GRAVITY BLANKET

If you're wondering why everybody on Instagram seems to be draped in weighted blankets, you can thank Gravity. Although the year-old startup didn't invent the accessories—which apply gentle pressure that studies say calms the nervous system—it perfected the art of marketing them to the masses. The buzz began in 2017, when Gravity uploaded a sleek video extolling its blanket; within months it had raised almost $5 million on Kickstarter. Co-founder Mike Grillo credits the success to good design (the Gravity Blanket looks and feels more luxe than its predecessors) and good timing. "The 2016 election was still fresh in people's minds," he says, and many were looking for ways to relieve anxiety. Although some find the blankets claustrophobic, others swear by them: Gravity has sold $18 million worth of blankets ($249 each), which weigh 15, 20 or 25 lb. and come in several neutral colors. —*J.D.*

ACCESSIBILITY

A hearing aid meant for the masses

EARGO MAX

Almost 48 million Americans suffer from some sort of hearing loss—and while many could benefit from a hearing aid, some are reluctant to wear them for aesthetic reasons. "There is a lot of stigma around hearing loss," says Christian Gormsen, whose company, Eargo, spent eight years building a device that works almost entirely out of sight. Eargo Max ($2,450) is a rechargeable hearing aid made specifically for people with mild to moderate hearing loss. Traditional hearing aids wrap around the ear and typically require several fittings and appointments with audiologists. Eargo Max, by contrast, fits comfortably inside the ear and can be bought online with help from a specialist. So far, customers have been receptive: Eargo expects to end the year with 20,000 active users. —*S.C.*

PRINTER: COURTESY ICON; BLANKET: COURTESY GRAVITY

FASHION + BEAUTY

'Unbreakable' pantyhose

SHEERLY GENIUS PANTYHOSE

Pantyhose have long been a staple in women's dresser drawers, yet they're so easy to rip and ruin that some fashionistas recommend wearing gloves just to put them on. "It seems ridiculous that all these other crazy technologies are being built but we haven't solved this super-basic problem," says Katherine Homuth, whose company, Sheerly Genius, set out about 18 months ago to change that. The result: a line of soft, comfortable pantyhose made of a type of fiber typically used in bulletproof vests and climbing equipment. They're "basically unbreakable," says Homuth. At $99 per pair, they're also considerably more expensive than traditional options. But many women are willing to splurge. Where normal pantyhose may rip after one or two wears, Sheerly Genius' are meant to last up to 50. —*K.S.*

COURTESY WONDERHATCH

The real-life Iron Man *suit*

GRAVITY JET SUIT

If birds could gloat, they would—what with the flying and all. But we may catch up soon, thanks to London-based Gravity Industries, a startup that has developed the coolest flying suit this side of *Iron Man*. The 1,050-horsepower system relies on five mini–jet engines—two each built into units attached to the hands and one built into a backpack. It can achieve speeds of 50 m.p.h. And for people with the right physical gifts, it's easy to fly. "A gymnast we worked with was able to master it in three tries," says inventor and company founder Richard Browning—though for others, he notes, the learning curve is steeper. For now, the suits are extremely expensive—a recent model went for $440,000—and extremely loud. But Browning hopes to raise money from ticket sales via suit races and other public events and roll the revenue into developing a quieter, cheaper electric version. There will, surely, be a market waiting. "It's not an *Iron Man* suit," Browning concedes. But it's not exactly not one either. —*Jeffrey Kluger*

A Holistic Response

China to promote global collaboration at UN climate change event in Poland

By He Jiankun

When representatives from around the globe meet in Katowice, Poland, for the annual UN Climate Change Conference, the world's attention will once again be on the 2015 Paris Agreement. The pact committed to limiting global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels, with 1.5°C being the preferred curb. The Katowice meeting in December is expected to come up with a roadmap for the implementation of the agreement.

China played a major role in the adoption of the Paris Agreement, committing to signing the pact early on in 2016. In the same spirit, China will continue to build bridges between different parties to help introduce measures to combat climate change. Specifically, China aims to help advance global collaboration for a comprehensive, balanced and effective implementation of the pact's provisions on issues such as mitigation, adaptation, funding, technology, capacity building and transparency.

Domestically, China has made addressing climate change part of its ongoing economic transition. The push for an energy revolution and a low-carbon shift in its development model will help lower greenhouse gas emissions—but is also crucial for meeting new development goals of modernization.

New normal

China's economy has entered a new phrase, in which growth has slowed. The average annual GDP expansion from 2013 to 2017 was 6.9%, compared with 10.1% from 2005 to 2013. Now the priority is on quality. As economic restructuring and industrial upgrading accelerate, the output of energy-intensive products and raw materials has reached its limit or begun to fall. The average annual growth of total energy consumption has declined to 1.9% (2013-2017) from 6% (2005-2013). The consumption of new and renewable energy has increased about 10% on average annually, fueling a low-carbon shift.

Energy conservation and the adoption of alternative energy sources have led to a fall in carbon intensity—carbon-dioxide emissions per unit of GDP—of more than 4% annually on average. It is much higher than the average level in developed countries. In recent years, China's total carbon dioxide emissions have stabilized or risen only slightly. As the economy rebounds in the coming years, total emissions may edge up but will not grow as rapidly as in previous years.

China has been aiming for carbon dioxide emissions to peak at around the year 2030, when the GDP is projected to grow at a relatively high rate of about 5%. For that to happen, carbon intensity at the peaking time needs to drop at a much higher annual rate than in developed countries. China must therefore redouble its efforts to save energy and exploit alternative energy resources.

China plans to cap its total energy consumption below five billion tons of coal equivalent by 2020 and six billion tons of coal equivalent by 2030. At the same time, it will step up the development of a low-carbon energy mix. According to plans, the power generated by non-fossil fuels will account for 50% of total power generation by 2030. Also, non-fossil energy will constitute more than 50% of total primary energy consumption by 2050. When carbon intensity decreases at a rate higher than GDP growth, the increased carbon dioxide emissions resulting from economic growth will be offset, allowing emissions to peak.

Currently, China's new and renewable energy sectors are flourishing with costs declining fast. The installed generation capacity of hydro, wind and solar power ranks first worldwide. But to meet the 2030 targets, the expansion must continue. From 2015 to 2030, installed non-fossil-fuel-based power generation capacity will have to increase by 1 billion kilowatts, equaling the current total installed power generation capacity of the United States.

Non-fossil energy supply should increase by 700 million to 800 million tons of coal equivalent, higher than Japan's annual energy consumption. Added investment in the power generation sector will surpass 10 trillion yuan ($1.44 trillion), thus creating a new driver of economic growth and numerous job opportunities.

Coordinated approach

China is committed to sustainable development while also addressing the threat posed by climate change. This strategy is three-pronged: first, change the economic development pattern; second, establish an energy supply and consumption system that is clean, low-carbon, safe and efficient; and third, build a green, regenerative industrial system. The goals are uninterrupted economic development, environmental improvement, energy security and lower carbon dioxide emissions.

The consumption of fossil fuels such as coal and oil is the main cause of both carbon dioxide emissions and the discharge of pollutants such as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and fine particles. Saving energy and switching to a low-carbon energy mix are effective ways not only of cutting carbon-dioxide emissions, but also of boosting economic efficiency, improving the environment and safeguarding energy security.

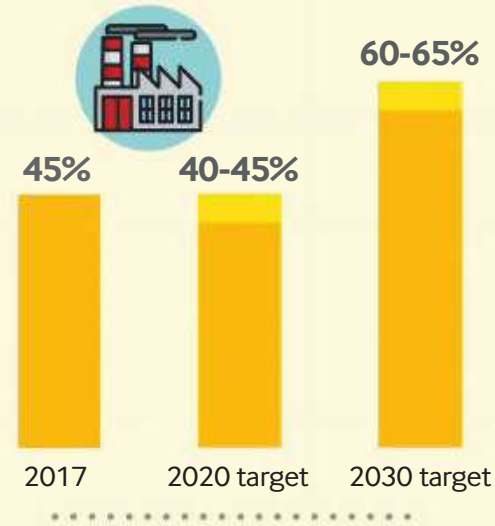
China has resolved to make very significant progress against pollution in the coming years. Measures have already been widely adopted targeting pollutants discharged from burning fossil fuels. The country recognizes that it is imperative to cut coal and oil consumption at the source. In coastal regions, measures are in place to reduce coal consumption. For instance, electricity is being increasingly used instead of coal for residential and industrial heating, paving the way for rapid expansion of renewable

The author is head of the Academic Committee of the Institute of Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Tsinghua University

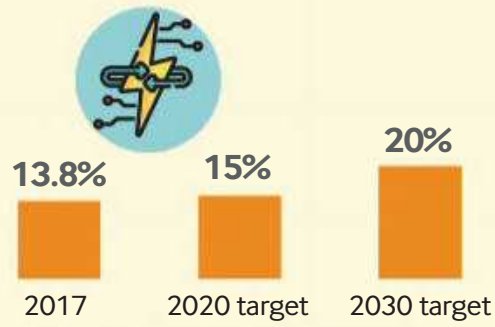
A photovoltaic industrial park in Zhongwei, northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, on the rim of the Tengger Desert (PHOTOGRAPH BY XINHUA)

China's Fulfillment of Its Climate Targets

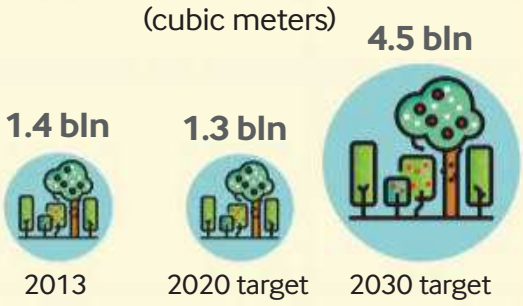
Reduction of carbon dioxide emissions per unit of GDP compared to 2005



Share of non-fossil fuels in primary energy consumption



Increase in forest stock compared to 2005
(cubic meters)



(Compiled by *Beijing Review*, *designed by Pamela Tobey*)

energy-based power generation.

China advocates an ecological culture with harmony between man and nature. The goal of achieving a fundamental improvement in the environment by 2035 is consistent with the country's state commitment to the Paris Agreement.

The carbon emission trading market in China will expand from power to other sectors such as petrochemicals, construction materials, iron and steel, nonferrous metals, papermaking and aviation. The market will cover about half of domestic carbon dioxide emissions and have the potential to become the world's largest. Carbon pricing will gradually replace government mandates, enabling market forces to prompt companies to upgrade their technology and promote energy conservation and the development of new energy.

Worldwide synergy

At the Katowice conference, the parties will engage in the Talanoa Dialogue, a free-ranging discussion of ideas on actions, outcomes and challenges in dealing with climate change. China can share its successful practices in energy and economic restructuring, environmental protection, low-carbon cities, and energy-saving and emission reduction policies.

Although U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew the country from the Paris Agreement, the United States remains a party to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and should abide by its principles and obligations. Trump's action is unlikely to have a major direct impact on the agreement's implementation. The United States Climate Alliance, representing 17 U.S. states and territories, has announced that it will observe the agreement and fulfill its responsibilities. A number of companies and institutions in the U.S. have also expressed willingness to provide funding to help developing countries cope with climate change.

The Chinese government, meanwhile, has been active in international climate cooperation. China has been emphasizing ecological progress and low-carbon development as it pursues the Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road Initiative, which aims to enhance connectivity along and beyond ancient Silk Road routes. At the same time, the country is working with other developing countries to defend the interests of the developing world.

Notably, those in the developing world have been calling on developed countries to honor their commitment to raise $100 billion a year in climate finance by 2020 to support developing countries. The funds will mainly benefit small island countries, the least developed countries and African countries. ■

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Comments to yanwei@bjreview.com

KiKi Layne and Stephan James make *If Beale Street Could Talk* one of the year's most affecting films

PHOTOGRAPH BY NATHAN BAJAR FOR TIME

THE BEST OF CULTURE

of 2018

MOVIES + TELEVISION + MUSIC + PODCASTS + BOOKS + THEATER + VIDEO GAMES

The 10 best movies

BY STEPHANIE ZACHAREK

1

ROMA

Alfonso Cuarón has built a career making beautiful films, but *Roma,* his tribute to one of the women who raised him—played, with simmering warmth, by newcomer Yalitza Aparicio—is his most gorgeous and moving. This is a deeply personal film for Cuarón, but its embrace is universal: in telling his own story, he gets us thinking about the latticework of people who made each of us what we are. *Roma* is an ode to the power of memory, as intimate as a whisper and as vital as the roar of the sea.

2

WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

Sometimes it feels like everything is awful and nothing will ever get better. Yet Morgan Neville's lyrical documentary about the quietest television superstar ever, Fred Rogers, of the long-running (and beloved) *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood,* suggests that kindness is the single most powerful way forward—and it's a resource available to all of us. Using vintage footage and interviews with people whose lives Rogers touched, Neville gets close to the mystery of what made this genuinely lovely man tick. It's sad that we no longer have Rogers, who died in 2003—but how lucky we were to have him at all.

3

FIRST REFORMED

Sometimes a film wears its anguish like fingerprints on a mirror. In Paul Schrader's *First Reformed,* Ethan Hawke gives one of the year's finest performances as a rural pastor who has lost his way, further hastening his own end with drink. A young woman from his congregation—played by a soulful Amanda Seyfried—reaches out when she fears that her husband, a radical environmental activist, may be planning a suicide mission. Politics, religion, the global-warming crisis—all the things we're either constantly talking about at our dinner tables or are afraid to talk about—come into play under Schrader's watchful eye. This is one of the most thoughtful, intense and ultimately fortifying films of the year.

4

EIGHTH GRADE

I watched Bo Burnham's debut film, *Eighth Grade*—in which newcomer Elsie Fisher gives a splendid performance as a girl making the leap from middle school to high school—with my heart in my throat. What terrible thing was going to happen? What great trauma would befall her at this vulnerable age? But there's no disaster of that sort in *Eighth Grade;* this lovely young woman to be just has to get through one of the most ego-deflating stages of life, and that's hard enough. Burnham's film—perceptive, affectionate, unsentimental—hits every note just right.

5

THE FAVOURITE

This lush, sly reimagining of events in the life of Britain's Queen Anne, directed by Yorgos Lanthimos, is sometimes a comedy and sometimes a drama, like a gemstone whose color changes depending on the light. Olivia Colman stars as the bored, unhappy Queen who lives for the affection of her closest friend and companion (Rachel Weisz)—until a scheming minx (Emma Stone) arrives at court. Allegiances are forged, broken and reforged in this dry-witted but ultimately moving film, which hits the sweet spot between acidity and tenderness.

6

CAN YOU EVER FORGIVE ME?

Sometime in the 1980s, biographer Lee Israel's livelihood dried up. Out of desperation, she turned to forging and selling letters by famous literary figures, making a mint until she got caught. From this true story, director Marielle Heller has made a terrific movie about romantic loneliness, prickly friendships and career stagnation: it's more entertaining than you'd think, but it also cuts close to the bone for anyone who's ever had to make an emergency U-turn professionally. Melissa McCarthy plays Israel, a woman who has been slapped with that euphemistic label *difficult* and who also happens to be gay. Her partner in crime is a dashing rake played by Richard E. Grant. Together they pull off a grand, if highly illegal, scheme—and they hold each other up even as everyone else leaves them to fall.

7

A STAR IS BORN

Who knew that the last thing we thought we needed—a remake of a film that's already been remade plenty of times—was exactly the thing we wanted? Director Bradley Cooper set out to reimagine this potentially threadbare story for the modern age, casting himself as close-to-washed-up country singer Jackson and putting Lady Gaga in the role of Ally, an unassuming but unassailably gifted singer-songwriter who becomes a superstar. The result is a cathartic melodrama that feels both fresh and comfortingly classic. "Maybe it's time to let the old ways die," Cooper sings in one of the songs from the movie's soundtrack. But he also knows what's worth preserving.

5 great documentaries

MCQUEEN

With affection and subtle directness, Ian Bonhôte and Peter Ettedgui pay tribute to the late, great designer.

THREE IDENTICAL STRANGERS

Tim Wardle tells the story of triplets separated at birth—with a shocking twist.

MINDING THE GAP

Bing Liu chronicles the lives of three young men growing up in a Rust Belt city.

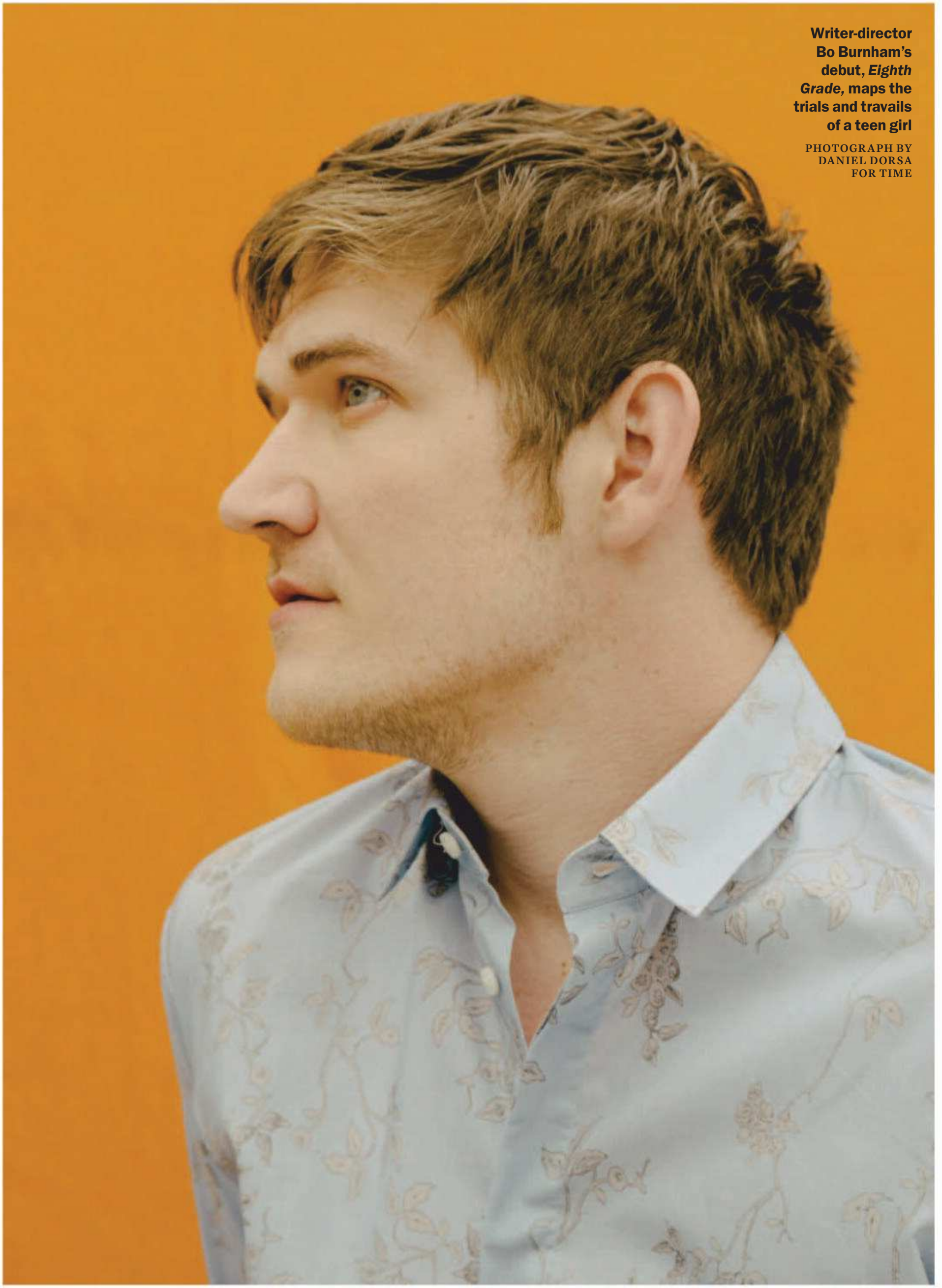
THE KING

Eugene Jarecki traces the rise and fall of Elvis Presley—and America.

RBG

Julie Cohen and Betsy West illuminate the life of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the Supreme Court Justice with the mostest.

MCQUEEN, RBG: GETTY IMAGES; MINDING THE GAP: HULU



Writer-director Bo Burnham's debut, *Eighth Grade*, maps the trials and travails of a teen girl

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANIEL DORSA FOR TIME

8

IF BEALE STREET COULD TALK

In Barry Jenkins' gorgeously crafted adaptation of James Baldwin's piercing novel, KiKi Layne and Stephan James play young lovers—and expectant parents—torn apart by a false accusation. The picture works on multiple levels: it's a beautiful movie about young people and a sharp indictment of a criminal-justice system that's anything but just. Regina King gives a superb supporting performance as a mother who can't bear to see her child, and the man she loves, suffer; through sun and shadow she bears witness to the couple's devotion.

9

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

It took forever for the thing to get made. Its director was fired during filming. (He had previously also been accused of sexual assault, which he denied.) Then the bad reviews poured in, focusing on the movie's wooden dialogue and paint-by-numbers storytelling. But *Bohemian Rhapsody,* starring Rami Malek as Queen lead singer Freddie Mercury, has a luxuriant, potent energy that movies of "higher quality" rarely pull off. It may be a bit of a mess, but it's a glorious one, a polychrome anthem about what it means to live for love and sex, rock 'n' roll and beauty—the very opposite of sticking to an agenda.

10

PADDINGTON 2

In *Paddington 2,* a talking bear in a blue duffle coat, voiced by Ben Whishaw, tries to buy a present for his 100-year-old aunt and wrongfully ends up in prison. While there, he delights the inmates with his innovative marmalade sandwich–making technique: even scary-tough institutional cook Knuckles McGinty, played by Brendan Gleeson, approves. Sweet without being squishy, this sequel is even more delightful than its wholly captivating predecessor, both directed by Paul King. Its generosity is invigorating—and we can all use a little more of that to spread around.

Honorable mentions

AT ETERNITY'S GATE

Willem Dafoe makes a glorious, complex Vincent van Gogh in Julian Schnabel's film about the artist's final years.

BLINDSPOTTING

Carlos López Estrada's terrific Oakland, Calif., gentrification comedy, with Daveed Diggs and Rafael Casal, cuts deep.

CHRISTOPHER ROBIN

Ewan McGregor stars as Winnie-the-Pooh's sidekick, now grown up, in this sweet, surprisingly affecting film.

SHOPLIFTERS

A tender, gorgeously filmed story about a family of thieves from Japanese master filmmaker Hirokazu Kore-eda.

THE HATE U GIVE

George Tillman Jr. adapts Angie Thomas's 2017 YA best seller into a marvelous, provocative drama.

Kiersey Clemons sings out, and breaks out, in *Hearts Beat Loud*

The 10 best movie performances

BY STEPHANIE ZACHAREK

1

YALITZA APARICIO
Roma

You can study acting your whole life and never feel you're getting it right. Or you can be a total nonprofessional—someone who never dreamed of pursuing an acting career—and deliver a performance so finely textured that no one would guess you'd never before stepped in front of a camera. Aparicio, who plays Cleo, the domestic worker in Alfonso Cuarón's semiautobiographical *Roma,* was teaching school in Oaxaca when the director found her. Lucky for him. Her performance is the kind of jewel a filmmaker could seek forever and never find.

2

ETHAN HAWKE
First Reformed

If you're going to make a movie about guilt and spiritual self-flagellation, as Paul Schrader did with *First Reformed,* you need a great face. Ethan Hawke plays the pastor of a small rural congregation who's torn between worrying about the world and punishing himself for what he views as past failures; both threaten to destroy him. With words and gestures but especially with that perpetually watchful, perceptive face, Hawke conveys both the selfishness and the deep suffering of people who just can't let go of their own pain. It's as if the tree of life is etched on his forehead.

3

KIERSEY CLEMONS
Hearts Beat Loud

This era of hip parents who want to be their kids' besties opens a whole new world of conflicts to explore. In *Hearts Beat Loud,* Kiersey Clemons plays a daughter whose sometime-musician dad (Nick Offerman) wants her to form a band with him, even as she yearns to break out on her own. Clemons is marvelous as the kid who's forced to talk sense into the parent: her character's kindness is as evident as her frustration—there's a kind of conscientious glow around her. Clemons also has a lovely singing voice, clear and airy as a muslin curtain. Yet there's nothing weak about it, or about this character's sense of self.

4

JOHN C. REILLY
The Sisters Brothers

In this vigorous and inventive western, Reilly plays a crooked gun for hire who's desperate to go straight. His sibling and partner (Joaquin Phoenix) doesn't get it. He also doesn't get why his brother carries an old paisley shawl in his pack. But when Reilly pulls out that shawl—given to him by the woman he loves—and inhales its muted perfume as if it were life's breath itself, his quiet yearning takes shape before our eyes. It's as subtle and gorgeous as a plume of smoke—and that's Reilly's particular brand of magic.

5

MELISSA MCCARTHY
Can You Ever Forgive Me?

You might not think you want to see a movie about a neurotic, anxious writer perched at the abyss of failure. But then you'd miss Melissa McCarthy's bold and sometimes bitterly funny turn as real-life literary forger Lee Israel. McCarthy's performance is fearless in the best way: she doesn't care if you like the taciturn, off-putting Israel or not. Before you know it, you feel everything for her. Her signature is genuine.

6

RAMI MALEK
Bohemian Rhapsody

There was only one Freddie Mercury; there can never be another. Even so, his spirit courses through Rami Malek in a movie that's less a biopic than a rapturous embrace. So many groups are vying for ownership of Mercury—Is he a gay icon, or a symbol of misunderstood pansexuality?—but Malek's fluid energy fills the screen beyond any defined boundaries. This is a marvelously complex performance, one that captures Mercury's emotional fragility as well as his magnificent, beyond-the-rainbow swagger.

7

OLIVIA COLMAN
The Favourite

In this wickedly audacious little picture, British actor Olivia Colman plays the real-life Queen Anne as a nervous, insecure ruler who'd rather cuddle her 17 pet rabbits than bother with affairs of state. When she falls prey to the cerebral and sexual charms of two members of her court (Rachel Weisz and Emma Stone), her innermost vulnerabilities are laid bare. Colman's performance isn't easy to pin down: in some ways the Queen is as wily and as manipulative as the two celestial seductresses in her orbit. But that's what makes Colman such a joy to watch. Her mystery is nothing short of regal.

The worst movies

LIFE ITSELF

Dan Fogelman holds your feelings hostage in this morbid melodrama that prioritizes sentimentality over coherent storytelling.

PEPPERMINT

Jennifer Garner's thriller about a suburban mom on a revenge spree is painfully formulaic and lazily written.

THE HAPPYTIME MURDERS

Not even an A-list cast could save this vulgar and offensive comedy starring raunchy, randy puppets.

THE KISSING BOOTH

Netflix's hugely popular teen movie trades in regressive and sexist stereotypes.

DESTINATION WEDDING

Keanu Reeves and Winona Ryder's misanthropic romantic comedy hits only sour notes.

8

MAHERSHALA ALI
Green Book

In 1962, Don Shirley, the classically trained pop pianist of Jamaican descent, toured the American South, with a white driver and bodyguard in tow. Peter Farrelly's open-hearted film *Green Book* chronicles the at-first uneasy friendship between that driver (Viggo Mortensen) and Shirley, played here with sagacity and elegance by Ali. Ali shows how much fortitude and discretion it took Shirley to fend off hostility—for more reasons than one—in the country he called home. There's no bitterness in this portrait—it's too warm and funny for that. But with little more than a sidelong glance here and there, Ali makes one point clear: we haven't come as far as we'd like to think.

9

LADY GAGA
A Star Is Born

Remember when Lady Gaga was cast as the lead in the oft-remade *A Star Is Born,* and the big question was: Can she carry a movie? Almost nobody is wondering now. Gaga's performance is a delight, revealing shadows and contours that perhaps not even her biggest fans had noticed before—like a Cubist painting that offers some new angle every time you look.

10

JONAH HILL
Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot

Gus Van Sant's portrait of recovering alcoholic (and quadriplegic) cartoonist John Callahan, played by Joaquin Phoenix didn't get enough love. But Jonah Hill's performance as Donny, a sort-of guru to Callahan, shouldn't be overlooked. Nearly unrecognizable with his beard and flowy blond Caucasian-Jesus hair, Hill's Donny is a calming presence, a cool stream in the midst of a forest wildfire. Callahan really needed a Donny—but nearly all of us could use one.

CLEMONS: DARIA KOBAYASHI RITCH; AT ETERNITY'S GATE: CBS; THE HATE U GIVE: 20TH CENTURY FOX; LIFE ITSELF: AMAZON; THE KISSING BOOTH: NETFLIX

The 10 best television shows

BY JUDY BERMAN

1

KILLING EVE

Amid a year of righteous, if belated, reckoning with women's disturbing experiences in Hollywood, *Killing Eve* celebrated the female gaze. Though its form—a cat-and-mouse thriller—was familiar, its central characters felt new: a bored, underestimated British intelligence operative (Sandra Oh) and the glamorous, girlish, maybe sociopathic assassin (Jodie Comer) she goes rogue to apprehend. As interpreted by writer and producer Phoebe Waller-Bridge, the characters were multidimensional but incomplete, their mutual obsession fueled by the sense that each woman had something crucial the other lacked. Both performances, especially Oh's Emmy-nominated study in midlife transformation, were breathtaking. For its fervent, largely female fan base, the show was a gift from the goddesses. *(BBC America)*

2

SHARP OBJECTS

HBO assembled a dream team—*Big Little Lies* director Jean-Marc Vallée, *UnREAL* co-creator Marti Noxon and stars Amy Adams and Patricia Clarkson—to adapt Gillian Flynn's novel about a self-destructive journalist who returns to her Missouri hometown to investigate the murders of two girls. Viewers patient enough to endure the miniseries' languid pace were rewarded with a timely Southern Gothic meditation on misogyny, the shameful legacy of slavery and how oppressors convince themselves they're victims. *(HBO)*

3

ATLANTA

Season 2 of Donald Glover's surreal dramedy borrowed its structure from—of all things—a long-forgotten *Tiny Toon Adventures* movie, sending each character on an independent quest. The setup yielded one of the greatest episodes in TV history: a fun-house mirror of black excellence starring Glover as Teddy Perkins, an unhinged musician Frankensteined from elements of Michael Jackson and Marvin Gaye. But as a complete statement, the season found thematic unity in a fragmented story and maintained *Atlanta*'s status as the least predictable show on television. *(FX)*

4

PATRICK MELROSE

Thank the TV gods for granting Benedict Cumberbatch's long-standing wish to play Patrick Melrose, the aristocratic antihero of five semiautobiographical novels by British author Edward St. Aubyn. The books should have been unfilmable: spanning 40 years, they chronicled addiction, abuse and deep-seated familial dysfunction, all filtered through Melrose's drolly bleak internal monologue. Cumberbatch walked an emotional tightrope, honoring the character's darkness without snuffing out the embers of hope that fueled his trudge forward. *(Showtime)*

Honorable mentions

RANDOM ACTS OF FLYNESS

Terence Nance does for sketch comedy what *Atlanta* did for the sitcom, using dream logic to tell stories about the black experience. *(HBO)*

AMERICA TO ME

In 2018, TV's most nuanced take on race in America was *Hoop Dreams* director Steve James' document of a year in the life of a racially divided Chicago-land high school. *(Starz)*

YOU

Lifetime kills its own clichés in this stalker-boyfriend drama that doubles as a satire of social media, male feminists and pop culture's most disturbing romance tropes. *(Lifetime)*

THE BISEXUAL

The Miseducation of Cameron Post* filmmaker Desiree Akhavan comes to TV in a dry British comedy that casts her as a woman who splits with her longtime girlfriend and starts exploring her bisexuality. *(Hulu)

5

THE GOOD PLACE

In its first season, Mike Schur's sharp sitcom placed four deeply flawed dead people (including star Kristen Bell) in a cheery, nonsectarian "neighborhood" of heaven—only to reveal that their swiftly deteriorating new community was actually hell. Since then, the show has rebooted its plot often enough to keep surprising viewers without losing sight of what it really is: a series of very funny lessons in philosophy and ethics, and an inquiry into whether people can change their own lives for the better. *(NBC)*

6

TERRACE HOUSE: OPENING NEW DOORS

Japanese reality franchise *Terrace House* is an extremely low-drama upgrade of the *Real World* formula, gathering mostly good-hearted young singles in a luxurious home and hoping they hook up. Though all of its seasons make for satisfying comfort viewing, *Opening New Doors,* set in the snowy idyll of Karuizawa, also served up a life-affirming romance between self-effacing female hockey player Tsubasa Sato and laid-back male model Shion Okamoto. In a year filled with so much heartbreaking news, their story felt like a rare beacon of hope. *(Netflix)*

7

CLAWS

Claws, a bonkers crime thriller about a Florida nail salon that operates as a drug front, was always going to be fun. Yet Niecy Nash makes every show blessed with her presence approximately 17 times better. Her performance as the shop's proprietor, Desna—who is both an organized-crime queenpin with an all-female posse and an overcommitted businesswoman looking for

OH: TRUNK ARCHIVE; NANCE: GETTY IMAGES; AKHAVAN: HULU

Sandra Oh's role on *Killing Eve* earned her the first Lead Actress Emmy nomination for a woman of Asian descent

PHOTOGRAPH BY JUSTIN COIT

love while caring for her autistic brother—ground the soapy story lines. The second season bested the first by using Nash's talents to explore Desna's vulnerability. *(TNT)*

8

MY BRILLIANT FRIEND

Global literary sensation Elena Ferrante conquered television with an Italian co-production that could bring foreign-language shows into the American mainstream. The first of four planned HBO miniseries based on her Neapolitan novels was everything the adaptation of a great book should be: a faithful translation of the author's introspective prose into a visual medium, endowing the two young, working-class heroines of Ferrante's coming-of-age tale with not only physical forms but also authentic internal lives. *(HBO)*

9

HOMECOMING

Homecoming felt like a confluence of small miracles: Julia Roberts came to TV. *Mr. Robot* creator Sam Esmail reined in his most inscrutable instincts. Bobby Cannavale got a role worthy of his jovial yet menacing machismo. A fiction podcast evolved into a visually stunning Hitchcockian serial. A political thriller found something new to say about the military-industrial complex. It all added up to a viewing experience that was uniquely—and bewitchingly—unsettling. *(Amazon)*

10

POSE

TV mogul Ryan Murphy used his powers for good in 2018, collaborating with first-time creator Steven Canals on this emotional drama set in the same 1980s Harlem ball scene spotlighted in the classic documentary *Paris Is Burning*. Anchored by queer and trans actors of color, *Pose*'s boundary-breaking cast inhabited a world shaped by poverty, racism and the AIDS crisis as much as revelry, competition and homespun glamour. The show's aesthetic captured that duality, juxtaposing characters' unvarnished daily struggles with stylized fairy-tale flourishes. *(FX)*

2018's TV MVPs

PATRICIA CLARKSON

In 2018, the actor gave two showstopping performances: as a crafty political operative on *House of Cards* and, in *Sharp Objects,* an icy Southern matriarch with a mansion full of secrets.

GREG BERLANTI

***God Friended Me. The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina. Black Lightning.* This is only a partial list of solid to stellar new shows the prolific producer had a hand in launching this year.**

SELENIS LEYVA

The *Orange Is the New Black* actor injected compassion into characters like *Dietland*'s feminist terrorist leader and, in *Maniac,* a corrupt administrator at a pharmaceutical company.

MARTI NOXON

The longtime creator continued to elevate women's voices, launching *Sharp Objects* and the less successful but more radical *Dietland.*

The 10 best comedy specials

BY ASHLEY HOFFMAN

1

HANNAH GADSBY
Nanette

Gadsby, who grew up gay in Tasmania, Australia—where homosexuality was only legalized in 1997—was sick of being self-deprecating for a laugh. So she created a tour de force performance that deconstructs all the familiar tropes of stand-up comedy. In the ashes, the comic bridges her history of trauma to contemporary culture's failure to address systemic abuse. *Nanette* kickstarted a global conversation, ensuring that her underrepresented perspective was finally seen and heard—and when Gadsby wrenches out her pain on stage, she reveals her strength, rage, and yes, winning humor.

In her acclaimed Netflix special *Nanette,* Gadsby says the set will be her retirement from stand-up

GADSBY: MOLLY MATALON—THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX; CLARKSON, LEYVA: GETTY IMAGES

2

APARNA NANCHERLA
The Standups

Nancherla makes petty gripes about modern life feel worth talking about, using a PowerPoint presentation to execute jokes about Yelp reviewers, emojis and dating-app dynamics. Backed by these clever visuals, she comes across as one of comedy's most irreverent and approachable voices.

3

ALI WONG
Hard Knock Wife

Wong, who earned acclaim for her fabulously raw 2016 special *Baby Cobra,* picks up right where she left off—and she's just as pregnant as she was last time. Her new set is filled with searing takes on the limits of maternity leave and the disappointments of early motherhood. Dad jokes, step aside.

4

CAMERON ESPOSITO
Rape Jokes

Esposito channels the kind of righteous fury that can only come from someone who's been through hell and clawed her way back. Her worthy mission—to ensure victims of sexual assault are the storytellers—never gets in the way of her ability to deliver one of the year's most hilarious specials.

5

TIG NOTARO
Happy to Be Here

Notaro rose to fame when she shared her breast-cancer diagnosis during what is now regarded as a landmark set back in 2012. Her deadpan style has already earned her legions of fans, but here she increases her ambitions and gets mischievous. That's never more evident than when she stretches out her final prank to brilliant effect. It's a clever play on audience expectations—just like the entire special.

6

CHRIS ROCK
Tamborine

Chris Rock could have done the same thing forever and people would have continued to tune in. But a decade after his last special *Kill the Messenger,* the comedy titan evolves by getting confessional about starting over after divorce. His willingness to derail the laughs shows a newfound vulnerability—all before he brings the act safely back to a funny zone.

7

JANI DUEÑAS
Grandes Fracasos de Ayer y Hoy

This Chilean comedian might be under the radar for many viewers. She shouldn't be. The Spanish title of her breakout special translates to "Great Failures of Yesterday and Today," and it's a winning study on our darkest and most human insecurities. Using her recent 40th birthday as the turning point, she muses on sex and beauty standards: "I have two options," she jokes. "Be a mother or be a drunk aunt. I still don't know which." The result is a set that's as perceptive as it is fearless.

8

W. KAMAU BELL
Private School Negro

In a year filled with topical comedy, the host of Emmy Award–winning CNN series *United Shades of America* delivers a standout monologue about raising children in a tumultuous political climate. The TV host and podcaster has always been skilled at finding the comic absurdity in darkness, but it's the moving way he talks about searching for hope that really makes this hour resonate.

9

HARI KONDABOLU
Warn Your Relatives

Plenty of comedy sets have wrestled with living in the era of Donald Trump, but few are this vivid. After elevating a dialogue about how the culture portrays South Asian communities in his documentary *The Problem with Apu,* Kondabolu goes all-in with a sharp commentary on injustice. Yet where a lesser voice might have gone polemical, Kondabolu kept it all sublimely playful.

10

JOHN MULANEY
Kid Gorgeous at Radio City

For proof of just how far former *Saturday Night Live* writer Mulaney will go to master comic timing, look no further than his feet. Filmed at Radio City Music Hall, his best work to date isn't only extremely funny—it's expertly choreographed, down to his fancy footwork. He goes long on well-paced yarns, like the silliness of proving you're human to a computer—and wherever he takes you, the payoff is satisfying.

The 10 best albums

BY RAISA BRUNER

1

INVASION OF PRIVACY
Cardi B

With her first album, Bronx rapper Cardi B had a lot to prove: the former dancer and reality-TV star, whose rise to popularity was buoyed by her candid, winning social-media persona, had only one big single under her belt: "Bodak Yellow," which topped charts in 2017. But *Invasion of Privacy* delivered—not just on the dark, defensive rap that earned her legions of fans, but also with irresistible hits like the fizzy "I Like It," which nods at her Latin roots. Cardi's debut doesn't just earn her a seat at hip-hop's table—it marks her as a singular voice.

2

DIRTY COMPUTER
Janelle Monáe

Monáe dazzled with her high-concept first two albums, performed in the character of a futuristic android. But on *Dirty Computer,* she loosens up, exploring the conditions of her identity as a queer black woman. She moves nimbly from singing, in the vivid feminist statement "Pynk," to rapping, on the fiery, confident single "Django Jane." It's fiercely political—and her best work yet.

3

BE THE COWBOY
Mitski

Isolation, insecurity, imperfection: on her fifth album, indie rocker Mitski is always striving to fix something, and she expresses those desires keenly in bright rock songs like "Nobody" and the haunting "Two Slow Dancers." No one else sounds like Mitski, but everyone can relate.

4

SHAWN MENDES
Shawn Mendes

At just 20, singer-songwriter Mendes had already risen from social-media star to platinum performer. But with his self-titled album, he arrived as an artist with something to say. From the urgent pop-rock hit "In My Blood" to the sweet R&B strains of "Lost in Japan," he balances his expressive tenor against stripped-down beats, touching on anxiety, violence and the challenges of young love in a blend of sensitive balladry and stadium-ready guitar rock.

5

VIBRAS
J Balvin

As Colombia's biggest superstar, J Balvin has carved out a space in mainstream music on his own terms; he makes no concessions for English speakers, instead serving up a colorful tour of Latin America's hottest musical trends. On *Vibras,* his sinuous Spanish raps take center stage, as on the irresistible megahit "Mi Gente."

6

HONEY
Robyn

Eight years after becoming a cult favorite for dance-floor anthems like "Dancing on My Own," the Swedish pop icon delivered a mature and experimental album that centered her hard-earned wisdom while embracing new sonic textures—and once again, she invites listeners to dance along with her.

Honorable mentions

0, SSION

Underground pop experimentalist SSION's Cody Critcheloe mashes up '80s, '90s, funk, dance and punk on an eclectic album that's equally moody and campy.

THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT, CHLOE X HALLE

On their debut album, the sister act—mentored by Beyoncé—use their skills as precocious beatmakers to make inventive alt-R&B.

LOST & FOUND, JORJA SMITH

The soulful British vocalist, beloved by Drake and Kendrick Lamar, puts her rich and supple voice to good use on songs about everything from racial profiling to young love.

HEAVEN AND EARTH, KAMASI WASHINGTON

Virtuosic jazz saxophonist and composer Washington explores the metaphysical on his latest, a double-sided meditation dense with bold riffs and pulsing energy.

7

BLOOM
Troye Sivan

Aussie singer-songwriter Sivan started out as a tween YouTube star and was propelled to fame by his confessional videos. On his second album, *Bloom,* he emerges as a true pop star, sensitive and confident. Drawing from a lush and sparkling sonic palette, he explores coming of age and coming out, crafting a joyful and unapologetically queer body of work.

8

GOLDEN HOUR
Kacey Musgraves

"You can have your space, cowboy," Musgraves sings tenderly on her single "Space Cowboy." It's the kind of savagely clever line that's made her one of country's most acclaimed artists. *Golden Hour,* the third album from the Texas-raised singer, is a study in contrasts: aching love letters sit alongside up-tempo numbers like the disco-infused "High Horse." But her songwriting is always laser-focused.

9

A BRIEF INQUIRY INTO ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS
The 1975

English pop-rock experimentalists the 1975 don't limit themselves to one style; they prefer to test new ones, like Auto-Tuned soul, tropical funk and jazzy punk-pop. The band's third album is a postmodern grab bag of genre innovations, cultural and political references, and even a sweet love song.

10

CAMILA
Camila Cabello

"Havana" was the big hit, but the rest of Cabello's debut solo album is subtler than that, modestly produced yet razor-sharp in its specificity. Creatively unlocked after her split from girl group Fifth Harmony, on *Camila,* Cabello nails down her own brand of fierce independence.

MONAE: AUGUST; SSION, SMITH: GETTY IMAGES

Monáe also released a nearly hour-long sci-fi companion narrative film for *Dirty Computer*

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTIN SCHOELLER

On “Girlfriend,” Christine and the Queens was influenced by ’70s band Cameo and producer Jimmy Jam

PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN PFLUGER

The 10 best songs

BY RAISA BRUNER

1

"GIRLFRIEND" (FEATURING DÂM-FUNK)
Christine and the Queens

On her album *Chris*, French performer Hélöise Letissier wanted to explore what it means to be manly—"a macho man," as she put it—while in a female body. On the dazzling, funky "Girlfriend," she pulls it off and then some. Flexing lyrically over a Michael Jackson–inspired beat, Letissier wrestles with, and ultimately rejects, gender norms. In the process, she proves that pop's boundaries can be just as fluid as identity—if only we are bold enough to assert ourselves as she does.

2

"THIS IS AMERICA"
Childish Gambino

With his musical project Childish Gambino, Donald Glover has the power to kick-start a news cycle with a single song—and top the charts too. Bolstered by an irresistible but layered music video, "This Is America" turned bona fide cultural phenomenon, and rightly so: as it swings effortlessly from trap to gospel, commenting on race and police brutality, Glover proves even our most insidiously catchy party hits can still have something to say.

CHRISTINE AND THE QUEENS: AUGUST; POST MALONE, EMINEM: GETTY IMAGES

The 5 worst songs

"PSYCHO," POST MALONE

Neither sung nor rapped so much as rhythmically brayed, this nonsensical whine-fest was the year's most embarrassing No. 1.

"GIRLS LIKE YOU," MAROON 5 FEATURING CARDI B

Cardi B's verse is the only saving grace of this inexplicable hit, which sounds engineered to soundtrack department-store commercials.

"THE HARD STUFF," JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE

Timberlake's ill-advised foray into folk comes crashing down on this messy, twangy tune.

"LOVER, LEAVER," GRETA VAN FLEET

Though the band is basically a Led Zeppelin tribute act, "Lover, Leaver" shows none of that band's creativity.

"FALL," EMINEM

Slim Shady's diss track is so tasteless that even his collaborator on the song, Justin Vernon, disavowed it.

3

"THANK U, NEXT"
Ariana Grande

Few artists have been the subject of as much public scrutiny this year as Grande—so when she surprise-released "thank u, next" not long after her widely covered breakup with *SNL*'s Pete Davidson, fans might have expected a diss track. Instead, "thank u, next" is a highly personal song of self-love and growth that subverts all the obvious pop scripts. It allowed Grande to reframe her narrative as an artist and a woman—and crafted an anthem that celebrates gracious independence over heartbreak.

4

"YEAH RIGHT"
Joji

Japanese-born Joji is part of a loose collective of artists expanding Asian representation in music—and on "Yeah Right," a slow-burning, melancholy R&B single, he effortlessly shows off his impressive range.

5

"SELF CARE"
Mac Miller

Pittsburgh rapper Miller died from an overdose just a month after releasing his last album, *Swimming*. "Self Care" is the standout, a sinuous and introspective track that nods at his demons. In a year that saw the passing of many beloved artists, Miller's insight into his struggles rings true.

6

"KETCHUM, ID"
boygenius

Indie rockers Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers and Lucy Dacus know it can be lonely as a solo act—doubly so as young women. Together as boygenius, the trio tap into the solidarity and strength of sisterhood with biting, honest lyrics and layered hums. "Ketchum, ID" is about the trials of tour life, but it's also an existential sigh among like minds.

7

"NO PLACE"
Rüfüs Du Sol

Australian electronic-music trio Rüfüs Du Sol became more than just an EDM act by turning trancelike instrumentation into a cathartic sonic journey, as on "No Place." It has the genre's trademarks—a soaring intro, steady beat and big drop—but vocalist Tyrone Lindqvist's understated performance is what really makes it sparkle.

8

"SUCKER PUNCH"
Sigrid

Norway's Sigrid has established herself as a master of precision pop, and from its first percussive twangs, "Sucker Punch" is a roller coaster of small movements. In speaking directly to a generation navigating the pangs of casual love, she shows her skill as one of pop's most relatable lyricists.

9

"IT RUNS THROUGH ME" (FEATURING DE LA SOUL)
Tom Misch

British artist Misch is a jazz musician first, and it shows in the relaxed soul of "It Runs Through Me." As he croons over a bossa nova beat, Misch riffs on a timeless, endlessly seductive subject: the sheer joy of music. Some worry jazz is dead, but Misch is here to prove it's simply evolving.

10

"BOYS"
Lizzo

No one has more fun than Minneapolis rapper Lizzo, whose bold, bouncy "Boys" celebrates sexuality and self-love over a funky beat. Lizzo's trademark is upbeat feminist anthems, and they're needed badly right now amid so much turmoil: her boundless positivity is a light in the dark.

The 10 best podcasts

BY ELIANA DOCKTERMAN

1

SERIAL

Serial became a runaway hit in its first season—then hit a lull in its second. But the true-crime podcast's third season is its best. Instead of focusing on one case, the show covers a new story at the Justice Center in Cleveland each week. The cases may seem mundane—like a man caught carrying weed—but many stories end in jaw-dropping revelations, exploring the effects of racial bias along the way. Host Sarah Koenig expertly demonstrates how daily miscarriages of justice amass into systemic problems.

2

SLOW BURN

After re-examining Watergate in Season 1, Slate writer and host Leon Neyfakh turns to Bill Clinton's impeachment for Season 2. The recency of that history makes for a more complex podcast: Clinton is still alive, and today's feminists are still reckoning with the way the media treated Monica Lewinsky. The parallels between the FBI investigations into Donald Trump and Clinton prove fascinating too—especially since many of the same political players appear in both sagas.

3

IN THE DARK

In the second season of the Peabody-winning podcast, the producers moved to Winona, Miss., to investigate the case of Curtis Flowers, a black man who was tried by a white prosecutor six times for the same murder. If only all true-crime shows would take this boots-on-the-ground approach: host Madeleine Baran susses out leads at family barbecues and on witnesses' porches. The podcast diligently avoids sensationalism—a rarity in true crime. Instead, Baran breaks down the case against Flowers quietly but thoroughly.

4

BINGE MODE: HARRY POTTER

If *Harry Potter* spin-offs like *Cursed Child* and *Fantastic Beasts* haven't sated your longing for more stories about J.K. Rowling's magical universe, this exhaustively researched, ridiculously fun show should do the trick. Hosts Mallory Rubin and Jason Concepcion meticulously recap every single *Harry Potter* book, chapter by chapter. They highlight Rowling's careful plotting and discuss how her themes of tolerance and resistance feel more relevant than ever.

5

THE HABITAT

Whoever travels to Mars first will be stuck with several other astronauts for years on end—so NASA enlisted six strangers to live in a remote, Mars-like environment in Hawaii for a year in order to research the social dynamic. Podcasting company Gimlet recorded the whole thing. As romances and feuds ensue, listeners learn a lot about space travel while bearing witness to an engrossing social experiment.

6

THE DREAM

The Dream investigates multilevel marketing companies that employ strategies resembling pyramid schemes. Host Jane Marie travels back to her hometown in Michigan, where many women have been enlisted to sell makeup or Tupperware for one of these morally dubious companies, and explores how MLMs grew into big businesses that ensnare millions.

7

THE WILDERNESS

The Wilderness is the best post-mortem of the 2016 presidential election yet. Crooked Media co-founder Jon Favreau, a former speechwriter for Barack Obama, asks why the Democratic Party fell apart and how it might recover. While he interviewed over 100 people for the series, his most intriguing talks are with voters who cast a ballot for Obama in 2012 and Trump in 2016. Their insights, however they might frustrate liberal listeners, elevate the show above partisan politics.

8

GETTING CURIOUS

Jonathan Van Ness of *Queer Eye* fame interviews subjects about, well, everything. Guests run the gamut from fellow members of *Queer Eye*'s Fab Five and Reese Witherspoon to psychologists and activists. Van Ness's effusiveness buoys the show, even extending to the titles of the episodes ("How Can We Be Less Rude to Bees?"). It's an age-old interviewer trick to pretend to know less than you actually do, but Van Ness disarms his guests with his genuine eagerness to learn.

9

EVERYTHING IS ALIVE

The premise of this podcast is admittedly weird: Ian Chillag interviews inanimate objects played by improvisors. Yet the show manages to be laugh-out-loud funny, surprisingly informative and often moving, like when a grain of sand explains that he thinks of himself in the plural—just one among many—suggesting that if humans thought that way too, they'd be kinder to one another. It all makes for a profound pleasure.

10

30 FOR 30: BIKRAM

ESPN's *30 for 30* podcast broke from its tradition of tackling a new sports story every episode for a five-episode arc on Bikram yoga's #MeToo scandal. Host Julia Lowrie Henderson was a devotee until Bikram Choudhury, the founder of the cultlike empire, was accused of sexual assault. Henderson hands the microphone to Choudhury's victims to share their experiences, setting an example for how to tell a story about perpetrators of abuse while honoring survivors' pain.

Honorable mentions

SANDRA

Actor Alia Shawkat stars in a funny, futuristic fiction podcast that probes our dependence on technology.

BODIES

Allison Behringer explains how doctors fail to understand certain bodies—especially female ones—by exploring intimate medical mysteries.

AMERICAN FIASCO

Men in Blazers' Roger Bennett hosts a wry documentary on the implosion of the 1998 U.S. men's soccer team.

THE SHADOWS

This stunningly personal fiction podcast from Kaitlin Prest will test audiences' comfort levels as they listen to a pair of puppeteers fall in and out of love.

THE REWATCHABLES

Rediscover old favorites like *The Princess Bride* and *Training Day* as culture writers discuss movies that will never grow old.

SHAWKAT: GETTY IMAGES; TRAINING DAY: SHUTTERSTOCK

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Rachel Kushner's previous novel, *The Flamethrowers,* was on TIME's list of Best Fiction in 2013

PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNY HUESTON FOR TIME

The 10 best fiction books

BY LUCY FELDMAN

1

THE MARS ROOM
Rachel Kushner

Romy Hall is a mother to a young son and a former dancer at a San Francisco strip club. She's also starting two life sentences at a miserable women's prison in California. Kushner, a two-time National Book Award finalist, slowly and deliciously unfolds the tapestry of Romy's backstory—infusing mystery and humor in unlikely places—while interrogating the harsh realities of the U.S. prison system.

2

ASYMMETRY
Lisa Halliday

Halliday's three-part novel debut made headlines for its first section, about the relationship between a young editor and a writer reminiscent of Philip Roth, with whom she had a real-life romance. But it's the subtlety and skill with which she ties that story to another—about an Iraqi American detained by immigration in 2008 at London's Heathrow airport—that cements her place as an essential new voice in fiction.

3

AN AMERICAN MARRIAGE
Tayari Jones

In Jones' novel, Atlanta couple Celestial and Roy are married for only a year when Roy, a black businessman, is wrongfully convicted of a violent crime. In chapters that shift between the perspectives of a husband in prison, a wife losing grip of their bond and a friend stuck in the middle, Jones illuminates the waves of injustice and heartbreak that unravel families entangled in a flawed judicial system.

4

MY YEAR OF REST AND RELAXATION
Ottessa Moshfegh

A sharp, beautiful, privileged—and deeply unhappy—woman in her early 20s employs the most ethics-immune psychiatrist in New York City to help her sleep for a year, hoping she'll emerge reborn. Moshfegh, author of 2015's award-winning *Eileen,* is the rare talent capable of inventing so strange and claustrophobic a premise. From it, she spins a darkly funny tale of heartache and redemption.

5

CIRCE
Madeline Miller

Miller's retelling of a Greek myth sets the sorceress Circe free from the prison of a male narrative. In *The Odyssey,* Circe makes her name by turning the hero's sailors to swine. In this best seller, she's defined instead by her resilience as a woman threatened by gods and mortals alike. Miller plays with the classics to upend ancient perspectives on gender and power.

6

WASHINGTON BLACK
Esi Edugyan

Wash, a child slave on a Barbados plantation, befriends his new master, an abolitionist scientist. When a man dies and Wash finds himself in danger, the pair embark on an epic journey across continents, testing the strength of their commitment to each other. In precise prose, Edugyan crafts an inspiring story of freedom and self-discovery.

7

THERE THERE
Tommy Orange

In Orange's fiery debut, 12 city-dwelling Native Americans head to the Big Oakland Powwow, each with different aims. The author masterfully knits their stories together at the event, which leads to a terrifying climax. *There There* is at once a poetic and suspenseful page-turner and a subtle condemnation of a shameful history.

8

GUN LOVE
Jennifer Clement

Margot and her teen daughter Pearl live in a car next to a Florida trailer park, poor but happy. When a dangerous man enters their lives, Pearl finds herself alone and enmeshed in a world of guns. Clement, a master of figurative language, crafts a moving coming-of-age story set in an America where rough justice sometimes rules the day.

9

FLORIDA
Lauren Groff

Groff's short stories study Florida, where treacherous weather and animal predators provide a backdrop to the struggles of characters like a homeless teacher, a betrayed husband and a writer reminiscent of Groff herself. The author of *Fates and Furies,* who moved to Florida over a decade ago, channels her palpable ambivalence toward her adopted state.

10

THE OVERSTORY
Richard Powers

Nature—and the urge to protect it—is what ties together the lives introduced in Powers' sweeping 12th novel. A young artist descended from chestnut farmers, a field biologist, a Vietnam War veteran and six other characters brush up against the mysterious power of trees and, intertwined, sound an urgent call to preserve our environment.

Honorable mentions

FRIDAY BLACK, NANA KWAME ADJEI-BRENYAH

In this vivid, original story collection, Adjei-Brenyah presents America in all its racism, weirdness and abject consumerism.

DISORIENTAL, NEGAR DJAVADI

This powerful, layered novel about a woman's escape from revolutionary Iran weaves in tales of her family.

THE HOUSE OF BROKEN ANGELS, LUIS ALBERTO URREA

A family gathers one weekend to celebrate and say goodbye in Urrea's bighearted, sprawling take on the Mexican-American experience.

CONVENIENCE STORE WOMAN, SAYAKA MURATA

Murata's affecting novel follows a misfit as she finds her place as the perfect employee in a Tokyo convenience store.

ADJEI-BRENYAH: LIMITLESS IMPRINT ENTERTAINMENT; MURATA: SHUTTERSTOCK

The 10 best nonfiction books

BY LUCY FELDMAN

1

BAD BLOOD
John Carreyrou

In 2015, Pulitzer Prize winner Carreyrou broke the news that $9 billion startup Theranos—which promised to revolutionize health care with a new blood-testing method—didn't have the technology it claimed to have. In this Silicon Valley drama, he opens his reporter's notebook to deliver a tale of corporate fraud and legal browbeating that reads like a crime thriller.

2

BARRACOON
Zora Neale Hurston

The final survivor of the last known ship to carry enslaved people from Africa to the U.S. was 86 when Hurston, then a young anthropologist, interviewed him about his enslavement and eventual freedom. The resulting work, unpublished until half a century after the beloved author's death, is an urgently empathetic story of persecution and survival.

3

EDUCATED
Tara Westover

Raised in Idaho by survivalist parents, Westover was taught to read but never sent to school. She first entered a classroom at 17—then, resisting the bounds of the life created for her, earned a Ph.D. in history from Cambridge University. In clear, ringing prose, Westover tells a story of tested family loyalties and hard-won self-actualization.

4

THE ORDER OF TIME
Carlo Rovelli

The Italian theoretical physicist behind the global best seller *Seven Brief Lessons on Physics* turns his attention to time: how it works and what we get wrong about it. Rovelli has crafted an accessible, mind-expanding read that challenges our perceptions of time, space and reality.

5

HOW TO WRITE AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOVEL
Alexander Chee

Chee has lived enough lives to fill a bookshelf of memoirs. As a teen, he immersed himself in the culture of Chiapas, Mexico. At the height of the AIDS epidemic, he shielded a bloodied friend during a protest. He married his boyfriend in the wake of Donald Trump's election. Along the way he became a singular and sincere writer of both fiction and nonfiction. In this collection of essays, he wields experience to probe the intersection of life and art.

6

THESE TRUTHS
Jill Lepore

The U.S. was built upon the ideals of equality, inalienable rights and the people's authority. Lepore is as interested in those pillars as she is in the phrase Thomas Jefferson used to describe them, which she borrows for the title of this nearly 1,000-page history. In it, she explores the ways in which the nation has succeeded—and often failed—to uphold its foundational values.

Honorable mentions

BELONGING, NORA KRUG

In this evocative graphic memoir, Krug wrestles with her family's ties to Nazi Germany and the weight of that history.

THE WIZARD AND THE PROPHET, CHARLES C. MANN

Will humans exhaust this planet? Mann explores how two 20th century thinkers presented conflicting visions—innovation vs. conservation—of our future.

WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE GOT HERE, DAVID REICH

A leading geneticist provides deep, provocative insights into the real story of humanity's tangled roots.

AMITY AND PROSPERITY, ELIZA GRISWOLD

Griswold offers an intimate account of a Pennsylvania woman's fight to protect her family against fracking—and the story of the poisoning of America.

7

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
David W. Blight

In his new work hailed by critics as a definitive biography, slavery scholar Blight employs lively and absorbing prose to capture Douglass's trajectory from escaped slave to celebrated orator and abolitionist. Drawing on newly accessible archives, Blight paints a remarkably robust picture of an American trailblazer.

8

ALL YOU CAN EVER KNOW
Nicole Chung

Chung, a Korean American raised in a white adoptive family in Oregon, searches for her biological parents as she prepares to become a mother herself—all while laying bare the pain she suffered from being different. Opening readers' eyes to the complexities of cross-cultural adoption, Chung makes a resounding case for empathy.

9

NINTH STREET WOMEN
Mary Gabriel

Abstract painters Lee Krasner, Elaine de Kooning, Grace Hartigan, Joan Mitchell and Helen Frankenthaler were women who defied the odds, upending the male-dominated postwar New York City art scene as they rose from downtown lofts and eventually to the Museum of Modern Art. In her vivid history, Gabriel captures both the artists and the cultural battles they fought in all their dynamic facets.

10

HOW DEMOCRACIES DIE
Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt

For decades, Harvard professors Levitsky and Ziblatt have studied democratic governments around the globe that succumbed to authoritarianism. Here they apply that expertise to American politics. Today, they assert, democracy's death is a slow burn, and it's already under way. Thankfully, they also offer a way out.

KRUG: NINA SUBIN; GRISWOLD: GUILLERMO RIVEROS

In essays about art and identity, Alexander Chee finds poetry in everything from tarot to catering

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK HARTMAN FOR TIME

Billie Piper has won a host of acting awards for her performance in *Yerma*

PHOTOGRAPH BY TOM JAMIESON

The 10 best theater productions

BY EBEN SHAPIRO

1

OKLAHOMA!

Edgy, dark and sexy aren't the qualities you typically associate with Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 musical about life on the prairie. Yet Daniel Fish's provocative take jolts new life into this oft-musty staple. The painfully relevant production lands at the exact right moment in a country where demonization of immigrants and outsiders is on the rise and mass shootings are an everyday occurrence. (Racks of guns ominously cover an entire wall of the set.) Damon Daunno's Curly is rock-star sultry, delivering a smoldering rendition of "The Surrey With the Fringe on Top." Plus, chili and corn bread are served at intermission.

2

THE FERRYMAN

Jez Butterworth is one of the most gifted playwrights of our time: his 2009 play *Jerusalem* was a marvel, a singular waterfall of dialogue. *The Ferryman* has the same intoxicating torrent of language—it's borderline Shakespearean. This show has it all: meaty themes, a first-rate cast, biting humor, Irish jigs and a jaw-dropping ending.

3

FAIRVIEW

Jackie Sibblies Drury's *Fairview* is theater as a punch in the stomach—it's surely one of the most intense, innovative dramas of the year. Told in three identical (sort of) acts, the play subverts and mocks the audience's racial stereotypes as each act gets weirder and weirder—until white audience members are called onstage to switch places with the mostly black cast. It's a vital production that literally forces viewers to confront the space they take up in society. It should be widely performed.

Honorable mentions

MLIMA'S TALE

Two-time Pulitzer winner Lynn Nottage turns her journalistic eye to the horrors of the global ivory trade with this story of a legendary bull elephant—played by the remarkable Sahr Ngaujah.

PALE SISTER

In staged readings in New York and the U.K., the stellar Beckett actor Lisa Dwan collaborated with the great Colm Tóibín for this fierce reimagining of *Antigone.* Long live the resistance.

SUGAR IN OUR WOUNDS

This heart-wrenching staging of Donja R. Love's slavery drama featured a magnificent tree that dominated the proceedings—and provided more than just shelter for this gentle queer love story.

4

SPRINGSTEEN ON BROADWAY

For anyone who has attended one of Bruce Springsteen's three-hour-plus stadium shows, his intimate one-man show on Broadway is a revelation. Drawing heavily from his best-selling memoir, *Born to Run,* Springsteen illuminates how he transforms the stuff of ordinary life into art without a shred of pretension. The show opened in 2017 and closes on Dec. 15, when Netflix will premiere a filmed version of the show—so fans can see it without paying $800-plus per ticket for front-row seats.

5

MY FAIR LADY

In this retooling of the classic play for the #MeToo era, director Bartlett Sher gives Eliza Doolittle (first Lauren Ambrose, now Laura Benanti) a newfound agency, making her the perfect foil for hapless patriarch Henry Higgins (Harry Hadden-Paton)—and a fully formed heroine for a more feminist moment.

6

YERMA

Billie Piper's blistering performance as a woman who goes mad and destroys her perfect life because she can't get pregnant dazzled London, then rocked New York City audiences to the core. Performed in a glass box at the Park Avenue Armory, which has become a home for some of New York's most challenging theater, the harrowing adaptation of a 1934 poem by Federico García Lorca leaves audiences speechless.

7

ON BECKETT

Bill Irwin's erudite evening on the Irish playwright is like the most entertaining college lecture you ever attended, delivered by a clown. One of the many highlights is Irwin's riff on the competing pronunciations of *Godot.*

8

ANGELS IN AMERICA

Still electric after all these years. Andrew Garfield is superb in the revival of Tony Kushner's sprawling political epic about the AIDS crisis—and he won a fiercely earned Tony for his performance. Yet *Angels* is made newly relevant by a sitting President who was tutored early on by the real-life lawyer Roy Cohn (diabolically played in this production by Nathan Lane). It's a shattering, essential show.

9

HARRY POTTER AND THE CURSED CHILD

It's a best-selling book series, a theme park, a blockbuster movie franchise and now a Broadway smash. And in classic *Potter* high excess, one evening proves insufficient to probe the psyche of the adult Harry (Jamie Parker) and his troubled son Albus (Sam Clemmett). *Cursed Child* is spread out over two nights, with a first-night cliffhanger for the ages. The true star of the show is the seamless stagecraft, which leaves the audience gasping in wonder—and terror—at the magic of it all.

10

TWELFTH NIGHT: SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK

If music be the food of love, play on. This new musical adaptation of *Twelfth Night* is sheer bliss. A mixture of stellar pros and enthusiastic amateurs enliven the Public Theater's Public Works Shakespeare in the Park production, with regular folk from all five boroughs joining in the celebration. Music by the splendid Shaina Taub, who is also one of the stars, makes it soar.

PIPER: THE NEW YORK TIMES/REDUX; NGAUJAH, DWAN, LOVE: GETTY IMAGES

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The 10 best video games

BY ALEX FITZPATRICK, ELIANA DOCKTERMAN AND PATRICK LUCAS AUSTIN

1

GOD OF WAR

Previous *God of War* games focused on Spartan turned deity Kratos' brutal acts of revenge against the gods who killed his family. This more mature story shows the aging demigod as a stoic father and grieving widower. *God of War* impresses with its game play, but players may need a tissue or two when the father-son dynamics get more real than mythic. *(PS4)*

2

SPIDER-MAN

Insomniac Games has made the best-yet video game featuring Spider-Man—in fact, players will so enjoy the simple act of swinging around a hyperrealistic New York City that they might forget about fighting classic Spidey foes like Wilson Fisk and Electro. *(PS4)*

3

INTO THE BREACH

From the makers of the award-winning *FTL: Faster Than Light* comes this turn-based strategy game set in a nightmarish future world overrun by monsters. As in chess, successful players must think ahead and make sacrifices for the greater good. *(Switch, PC)*

4

SUBNAUTICA

Subnautica is a sci-fi survival game in which brains, not brawn, are key to staying alive. Players take the form of a futuristic astronaut who crash-lands on a mysterious ocean world. While the deep blue sea is beautiful, it's also dangerous. As a bonus: developer Unknown Worlds refreshingly kept guns out of the game to make it feel like an escape from real-world violence. *(Xbox One, PC)*

5

RED DEAD REDEMPTION 2

A prequel to 2010's much loved original, Rockstar Games' *Red Dead Redemption 2* is a sprawling tale about the decline of the lawless West. Players fill the shoes of gang member Arthur Morgan, on the run after robbing an oil magnate's train. The otherwise enjoyable game was marred by reports of overworked developers. *(PS4, Xbox One)*

6

FLORENCE

A standout in an emerging genre that blurs the line between video games and interactive stories, *Florence* is a novel experience in which gamers solve puzzles to help the main character advance her new relationship. In *Florence*, unlike other puzzle games, the challenges actually get easier as the game goes on, a moving metaphor for the bond that grows between people over time. *(iPhone, Android)*

7

SUPER MARIO PARTY

Super Mario Party is a satisfying return to form for a classic franchise. This time, Nintendo's designers have wisely simplified *Mario Party*'s board-game elements while bolstering the crowd-pleasing mini-games. This version also takes advantage of the motion sensors in the controllers, letting players shake, flip and stir their way through seriously silly contests. *(Switch)*

8

ASSASSIN'S CREED ODYSSEY

The latest in Ubisoft's long-running series drops players in ancient Greece during the Peloponnesian War. While it offers gamers more plot-altering choices than ever before and (finally) gives them the ability to pick between genders, it largely takes an if-it-ain't-broke-don't-fix-it approach to deliver a Greek-history geek's dream game. *(PS4, Xbox One, Switch, PC)*

9

DANDARA

In a radical update to the old-school 2-D platformer, *Dandara* players dart from point to point to help the titular hero (inspired by a 17th century Afro-Brazilian abolitionist of the same name) save her "world of Salt" from the mysterious and infectious Golden Idea. The beautiful graphics and wide range of attacks make the steep learning curve worthwhile. *(PS4, Xbox One, Switch, PC, iPhone, Android)*

10

DONUT COUNTY

Among the year's strangest games, *Donut County* turns each player into a giant hole in the ground swallowing up as many houses, people and pets as possible. Lurking just beneath the surface of this enjoyable oddball is a surprisingly poignant message about selfishness and greed. *(PS4, iPhone, PC)*

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10 Questions

Liane Moriarty The best-selling author of *Big Little Lies* on her new book, sibling rivalry and unhealthy obsession along the path to wellness

The main character in your new novel, *Nine Perfect Strangers,* is a genre fiction writer who gets little respect. Is she a mouthpiece for you? A little bit. I didn't want the book becoming a soapbox or preachy. But of course because this character was close to my heart, she has feelings that would be similar to mine.

Other characters have recently experienced sudden windfalls. What changed for you after you became successful? The biggest change was it enabled my husband to become a stay-at-home dad. It enabled me to go on book tour while he holds the fort.

***Nine Perfect Strangers* is set at a spa. How do you feel about the wellness industry?** I hope I satirize it in the same gentle way that I satirized overly involved school parents [in *Big Little Lies*]—with great affection. We absolutely need those overly involved school parents, and I completely believe in mindfulness. But people can become obsessive. It's always fascinated me, the things people are prepared to do in the name of self-improvement.

I certainly hope you got to go to a spa for research. Did you? I did, but I didn't suffer much for my art. I did go for five days without coffee or alcohol. And it enabled me to describe the drilling sensation in the center of your forehead when you give up caffeine for five days. So it was useful. I looked at Trip Advisor for the crazier things.

Can you describe the feeling of watching *Big Little Lies* as a TV series? Great interest. People said, "I hope they don't change your book," and I've always said, they can't—nobody can change your experience of reading my book. I watched it on my iPad and something went wrong and I thought the whole series finished two minutes earlier. So at first I thought the ending was ridiculous; it was so abrupt.

"IT'S ALWAYS FASCINATED ME, THE THINGS PEOPLE ARE PREPARED TO DO IN THE NAME OF SELF-IMPROVEMENT"

Two of your five siblings are also writers. Who inspired whom? My sister Jaclyn Moriarty was the first to be published. It was sibling rivalry that inspired me to write my first novel.

Does the rivalry extend to your not introducing her to Nicole Kidman [who optioned the rights to both *Lies* and *Strangers*] just in case she likes her novels more? Yes, I keep Nicole hidden away! No, the sibling rivalry extends to family anecdotes. When we read each other's work, we say, "Oh no, you've taken that family story!" We get really cross with each other.

In some ways *Nine Perfect Strangers* reminded me of the Stanford Prison Experiment, where "inmates" did what they were told even when it seemed inhuman. Why do we do what we're told? For this book, I read about Jonestown, so I did want to give that feeling of being in a cult. We're all basically obedient. I think that desire to be someone new is so strong that it's easy to believe the most ridiculous things.

This novel explores what people think about when they're facing death. Do you think that reflects your Catholic-school education? I don't like to analyze how much of myself goes into my books. The fact that little parts of myself might find their way into these stories—it's mortifying, to be honest. But I definitely have that Catholic feeling of guilt; I feel guilty about my success. In the early days I used to think, "You're going to pay for this; something terrible will happen next." Nothing has yet. But if it does, I'll think, "Well there you go; you deserved it."

Do you get to have a little rest now or are you already working on another book? I'm really looking forward to life going back to normal. I never knew being an author involved so much makeup. —BELINDA LUSCOMBE

MARK CONDREN—THE IRISH INDEPENDENT/EYEVINE/REDUX

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